

THE SPIRITUAL RECORD.

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*AGNOSTICISM.**

THE AGNOSTIC ANNUAL for 1884 has among its contributors Professor Huxley, Professor Newman, Professor Ernst Haeckel, P. A. Taylor, M.P., "Saladin," and some lesser lights.

First of all, one would like to know what it is to be an Agnostic. It means not to know. There was, many years ago, a party in American politics which, not being up to Greek, called itself the "Know-nothings." Agnostic is much prettier. In our enlightened days every inventor of a quack nostrum finds a Greek name for it—if possible of at least five syllables. Even our friends the Vegetarians are not satisfied with the old latinised designation, and have begun to call themselves "Akreophagists."

Professor Huxley, the "man of light and leading," in this "new departure" of our ancient friends, the Materialists and Atheists, informs us, in the brief communication which he declares to have been obtained by false pretences, and which he never wrote for publication, that—

"Agnosticism is of the essence of science, whether ancient or modern. It simply means that a man shall not say he knows or believes that which he has no scientific grounds for professing to know or believe."

The more you know the more you don't know. But another motto on the title-page seems to rather contradict this. It says:—

"The fundamental principle of Agnosticism is, that the finite *may* have relativity with, and therefore a cognisance of, the absolute."

* "The Agnostic Annual," 1884. London: H. Cattell & Co., 84 Fleet Street.

That is a comfort, anyhow; and this motto might well be posted up in large letters in all Secular or Agnostic lecture halls.

The third motto is an extract from a letter of Charles Darwin, written, apparently, when he was growing, as he says, "more and more" agnostic. The rather halting statement reads—

"I think that generally (and more and more as I grow older), but not always, an Agnostic would be the more correct description of my state of mind."

If not always, why not? And did they bury him in Westminster Abbey because he was only occasionally, though, as he grew older, more and more stupid—we mean Agnostic?

Mr. Charles A. Watts, having so adroitly drawn so many leading lights to know-nothingism, naturally writes a triumphant preface. He tells us that "the most marked characteristic of modern science and philosophic thought is their tendency towards Agnosticism"—which, being interpreted, is the more you know the more you don't know. "The creed of Agnosticism, if it may be said to have any, is based exclusively on the known and the knowable."

Bravo! Not knowing is based on the known; and the know-nothing instinctively knows what is or is not knowable. *Therefore* "Agnosticism recognizes the right and necessity of Free Thought" (while denying the possibility of any freedom in human action) "and, *consequently*, its action towards popular orthodoxy is one of unmeasured hostility."

So far as logic and consistency are concerned, this able editor is an undoubted Agnostic. An Agnostic, advocating free thought, and proclaiming "unmeasured hostility" to any thought which does not happen to suit him!

"Agnosticism," he tells us, "is *opposed* to both Atheism and Theism, and also that "it needs no deep penetration to foresee that the enduring and all-sufficing principles of Agnosticism will be the basis of the philosophy of the future."

Delightful future! whose whole science and philosophy will consist in sturdily insisting upon ignorance, and exercising free-thought by visiting every thought but your own with "unmeasured hostility."

Now for the *modus operandi* of the fishing for contributors to an Agnostic Annual. A very polite circular was written, asking answers to the following questions:—

"1. Is Agnosticism (ignorance) in accord with modern science? 2. What is its relation to popular theology? 3. Is Agnosticism (profession of ignorance) destined to supplant religious supernaturalism?"

The first to rush into this neatly-baited trap—soon to be sorry and want to get out of it—was Professor Huxley, whose refusal to know anything that may be unpopular, has been abundantly demonstrated in his attitude to Spiritualism.

He answered the questions at once, and evidently for publication. He pretends, in a letter to the *Academy*, in which he was sharply criticised, that the following was a private letter to Mr. Charles A. Watts. Does it look like it? *Read!*

"Some twenty years ago, or thereabouts, I invented the word 'Agnostic' to denote people who, like myself, confess themselves to be hopelessly ignorant concerning a variety of matters, about which metaphysicians and theologians, both orthodox and heterodox, dogmatise with the utmost confidence; and it has been a source of some amusement to me to watch the gradual acceptance of the term and its correlate, 'Agnosticism' (I think the *Spectator* first adopted and popularised both), until now Agnostics are assuming the position of a recognised sect, and Agnosticism is honoured by special obloquy on the part of the orthodox. Thus it will be seen that I have a sort of patent right in 'Agnostic' (it is my trade mark); and I am entitled to say that I can state authentically what was originally meant by Agnosticism. What other people may understand by it, by this time, I do not know. If a General Council of the Church Agnostic were held, very likely I should be condemned as a heretic. But I speak only for myself in endeavouring to answer these questions.

"1. Agnosticism is of the essence of science, whether ancient or modern. It simply means that a man shall not say he knows or believes that which he has no scientific grounds for professing to know or believe.

"2. Consequently Agnosticism puts aside not only the greater part of popular theology, but also the greater part of popular anti-theology. On the whole, the 'bosh' of heterodoxy is more offensive to me than that of orthodoxy, because heterodoxy professes to be guided by reason and science, and orthodoxy does not.

"3. I have no doubt that scientific criticism will prove destructive to the forms of supernaturalism which enter into the constitution of existing religions. On trial of *any* so-called miracle the verdict of science is 'Not proven.' But true Agnosticism will not forget that existence, motion, and law-abiding operation in

nature are more stupendous miracles than any recounted by the mythologies, and that there may be things, not only in the heavens and earth, but beyond the intelligible universe, which 'are not dreamt of in our philosophy.' The theological 'gnosis' would have us believe that the world is a conjurer's house; the anti-theological 'gnosis' talks as if it were a 'dirt-pie,' made by the two blind children, Law and Force. Agnosticism simply says that we know nothing of what may be beyond phenomena."

Does that read like a private letter to Mr. C. A. Watts? Is it not, in every line, an evidently egotistical and characteristic pronouncement—Huxley all over?

Whatever may be the relations of Professor Huxley to the word he invented, and should have secured by letters patent, the next contributor or respondent, "G. M. M'C.," is very clear.

"Agnosticism," he asserts, "is the Religion of Infinite Depth—a depth of yearning wistfulness, born of love and compassion. It is the only 'persuasion' which is never hackneyed or vulgarised—the one which suits all who, knowing much or little, are content to become 'as little children' before the mysteries which chain every tongue. It is the golden creed, the unwritten one, whose highest symbol is the finger on the lips.

'Who asks doth err, who answers errs;
Say nought!'

A religion we have called it; but it merits a nobler name. Call it rather a life—the life itself, and not the bond of life, lived between the sunshine of to-day and the shadows, which are not gloomy, nor thronged with spectral forms, of the coming night. The night cometh, but also the morning."

This definition of Agnosticism may not be perfectly clear to some of our more benighted readers, but the author, in the following lucid note, has explained it to prevent any possible misunderstanding. He says:—

"Without entering upon a philosophical disquisition, I would point out that though, objectively, all, rightly speaking, is mystery to us (for of the objective, apart from our subjectivity, and as 'mind-stuff,' nothing is, to us), yet the possible connection of our subjective nature with all that has being, so far from limiting the field of known or unknown influences affecting us, really forbids its being bounded in reality. Limits on our subjective side there doubtless are, supposing our variable, individual cognition the measure. For who shall say that cognition and subjective impression are interchangeable terms? The corner-stone of sound

philosophy may lie hereafter in what may presently be but a hypothesis—in the *interchangeableness* of subject and object, not in their identification, as has been attempted; and in our human subjectivity being, in its turn, but the objective creation of the Unknowable, in whom all things consist. Naked and open our subjectivity would thus remain, partially known on our subjective side, complete on the other objectively. It is a cause of joy to us, rather than of sorrow, that these depths are so profound.”

“Saladin,” co-editor of the *Secular Review*, Scottish poet and metaphysician, is, if possible, a more luminous Agnostic than “G. M. M’C.” But we doubt if he is as thorough as Huxley. He has the weakness to admit the Cartesian dictum, *Cogito, ergo sum*; at least he admits that, “if not the prime hypothesis, it is the prime hypothesis attainable.” Is it consistent with pure Agnosticism to assert that “our consciousness is the basis of the proof of our existence”? It may be true that “outside this, egoity is undemonstrable, and, without the assumption of egoity as an entity, ontology would be simply impracticable and psychology impossible.”

We cheerfully admit that this seems reasonable, but is it Agnostic? Is it not opposed to every principle of Agnosticism to say with Lewes, “That consciousness is the certitude of existence is an irresistible certainty, and, as such, a fitting basis of philosophy”?

“Saladin” informs us that “there is a vulgar impression abroad” (but how a vulgar impression could possibly get abroad, he is quite too Agnostic to attempt to account for) “that Agnostic is a name adopted by a certain order of advanced thinkers, that they may thereby avoid the popular odium of Atheist.” But he utterly condemns “the aspersions of the unabstract asperser.” He says—“I was an Atheist before I was an Agnostic. . . . Jehovah, as an objective reality, exists to no one whose mind has strength to rise out of the cradle of its childhood. . . . The subject could now only be discussed in a tap-room and before uninformed persons. . . . The Agnostic knows, as Professor Huxley says, ‘nothing of what may be beyond phenomena.’”

Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P., quite understanding that the inquiries sent him meant the publication of his answers, is frank as usual. He says:—

“Agnosticism being, as I take it, purely negative, I do not see how it can ‘supplant’ anything. Supernaturalism does not seem

to me to have any definite meaning. To the savage thunder seems supernatural, because he does not understand the unusual phenomenon. Agnosticism I should define as the line beyond which science has not penetrated. Some people understand by supernatural that which is in opposition to law; I think that the further science advances, the more will be developed harmonious and universal law. Of course, I speak of science in its most universal sense—as evading nothing, while proving what it can. I do not consider it scientific to lay down Atheistic dogma, and deduce, in the plenitude of our ignorance, *God is impossible.*”

Mr. Charles Watts, one of the editors of the *Secular Review*, does not quite hold with Mr. Taylor. Those who profess the profoundest ignorance may well agree to disagree—though how people who know nothing, and therefore assert nothing, can possibly have any disagreement is another unfathomable mystery. Mr. Watts, with a strong squinting towards his former coadjutors of the Bradlaugh and Besant party, says:—

“If Atheism rely upon monism and affirm that there is only one *substance* in the universe, it is non-philosophical, and asserts as certain what Agnosticism holds as problematical. If, however, Atheism simply says that neither appearances nor that which we postulate behind appearances is God, Agnosticism *includes* Atheism. The adoption of Agnosticism does not lessen our duty to assail the position of those who dogmatically assert, as a settled truth, the existence of God, soul, and future existence.”

That is to say—those who confess that they do not know certain facts of human existence, are bound to oppose those who declare that they *do* know them.

Professor Newman writes what he thinks. He sees that supernaturalism has been all but universal in the life of the race, and does not see how it can ever be supplanted.

“Finally,” he says, “I must say *I am not an Agnostic*; on the contrary, I believe that something can be known, and is important to be known, concerning God, as a spiritual being, author of man and approver of righteousness; all of which the Agnostics deny.”

“IGNOTUS” is also unable to agree with some of his fellow-Agnostics. He says:—

“Agnosticism is not Atheism in disguise. Atheism frees itself from great mysteries by entangling itself in greater. It asserts that the universe is *self-existent*. But self-existence is absolutely unthinkable. By self-existence is meant an *uncaused* existence; and an existence without a cause is inconceivable. Further, an

uncaused existence must be something *existing from the beginning* : for to admit that there was a time when self-existence began to be is to admit that it was caused by something antecedent to it ; which is a contradiction. Now, no Herculean intellect, by its most gigantic effort, can form any conception of existence without a beginning. Hence, self-existence is unthinkable. Therefore, Atheism, which is built upon the theory of self-existence, is unthinkable too."

Mr. M'TAGGART, luminous and lucid as every Agnostic should be, declares with much emphasis that "a complete induction is impossible owing to our want of knowledge of the absolute." He finds Agnostics inconsistent—like other people. We can imagine their feelings as they read :—

"It is surely a *petitio principii* to say the absolute is unknowable by me in every particular, and then to predicate something of it by stating something about it—by stating that it cannot be relative. Now, I venture to think that the absolute, to be the absolute, must include all terms of relation ; the absolute being the whole, and the varying states of relation being the part. And, if this is so, we ourselves have clearly a point of contact with the absolute, owing to the relation which we ourselves bear to the whole. The absolute, then, becomes relative to us, as the relation of a whole to its part."

How an Agnostic can "venture to think" is a mystery. Next we shall have one venturing to know something, which of course will put an end to his Agnosticism.

Professor Haeckel, the libeller of Zöllner and Wallace, takes the opportunity to advertise his books, and to claim that their monistic teachings "agree in all essential points with that natural philosophy which in England is represented by Agnosticism."

So far the Annual, which, in consequence of what its publishers consider Professor Huxley's ungentlemanly and disreputable conduct, has gone to a second edition, in which the inventor of Agnosticism is thoroughly exposed, and shown up in his true colours—as far, at least, as the truth can be said to be known in the world where the safest profession one can make is one of utter and irremediable Agnosticism.

The Rev. John Page Hopps, at Leicester, appears to have taken the *Agnostic Review* as the subject of a sermon, from which we copy an extract, as reported in the *Midland Free Press*. Mr. Hopps said :—

"True, they did not get any nearer to the slightest conception of what God was in Himself, or how He existed, or how He

worked. But neither had they the slightest conception of what mind or thought or life was, or how anything came to be at all. They must grasp that well, for it was a fact beyond all question, that the existence of God was no more a difficulty than the existence of mind or thought or life—because they knew no more about the one, though they seemed to be more familiar with it, than the other. In the scientific sense to which Mr. Taylor and the Agnostics wanted to bind them down, they did not know eternity because they had not demonstrated it, and with their present faculties they only knew that they never could know it. There was no denying or doubting it. Why? Try. Think, if they could, of a beginning of time. They could not. There never was a human being constructed who could think of the beginning of time, because time could never be conceived of as beginning. The same was true of space. They could not think of the beginning of space. It was boundless and infinite as time and eternity. Yet they knew that both were infinite, and was not that the same as the problem of God? Mr. Hopps next combated the statement that Agnosticism was inactive and supplanted nothing. The Agnostic's ignorance was his view with regard to the Supreme Being as much as a Theist's belief was his, and one view could be supplanted by the other. They had to make a choice whether they would decide that they had grounds for belief, hope, and expectation, or whether they had none. The Agnostic did not avoid decision by professing that he did not know. His decision was as real as the Theist's. Alluding to the last part of his subject, Mr. Hopps remarked that they could kill the old childish notions of the world that men could not help in days gone by, because men knew no better; they could kill cruel creeds, proud priestcrafts, and conventional ritualisms. But the Christianity of Jesus, of the Gospels, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sermon on the Mount they could never kill. It would live to make science itself a high priest in the abiding temple—a guide to the Holy of holies in the great unseen."

This is very well as logic. We do not understand the universe any the better for eliminating from it the idea of a Creator. Order naturally supposes Wisdom and Power—design, a Designer.

Mr. Peter Taylor does not see that the word Supernaturalism has any definite meaning. The reader may have met with several words in the course of this article of rather a hazy character to him—but probably full of significance to the writers. We limit the significance of the word Nature when we say a thing is supernatural or preternatural. It is hypercritical to object to a word that every one understands. A ghost—the objective appearance of a human being whom we know to be "dead and buried,"

but whom several persons together can see, and hear, and touch, may well be called a supernatural manifestation or phenomenon. Yet it is a fact that thousands of persons have experienced, and that some of the most scientific men of our age have carefully examined.

One such fact, of the thousands clearly established, puts an end to the greater part of Professor Huxley's invention—which, like some others, seems to have plagued the inventor. We see no sense in making a boast of ignorance, and think it a safer and better way to know all that can be known.

In justice to the *Agnostic Review*, however, it must be said that its editor has admitted one timid plea for a "life beyond." Under the heading, "*Agnosticism and Immortality*, Mr. Eugene M. Macdonald writes:—

"The origin of the belief in immortality is only a question to speculate upon; it cannot be definitely settled. The fact remains, that there are people holding the belief. The question is, Is it true? Human testimony is for it; scientific investigation is, as yet, against it. The true Secularist will, upon this subject, confess himself an Agnostic. Living people profess to have seen and touched re-incarnated spirits. . . . We certainly should suspend judgment on that which thousands testify to, but which our reason does not see the way clear to accept. Nature has inspired men with a desire for existence; it is but natural that they should not wish to be blotted out. Immortality is a great religious problem, not to be lightly settled in a moment. There may be something real in this idea which has fed the hope of millions, and it may be but faith's shadowy vision, or love's pleasing dream; but 'it was not born of any book, nor of any creed, nor of any religion. It was born of human affection. It is the rainbow Hope shining upon the tears of Grief.' There is no use in worrying over this problem. The more it is studied, the deeper the mystery grows. Agnosticism is better than dogmatism on either side."

It is wrong to say that scientific investigation is against the belief in a continued existence. How can it prove a negative? Science is never Agnostic. It is the function of Science to know. There are no more thoroughly scientific men in our age than those who have examined and given their testimony to the reality of Spiritual manifestations. Those who deny them are precisely those who have *refused* to examine them.

"Hylo-Idealism," we ought perhaps to explain, is the new

philosophy, excogitated by Dr. Lewins from the Protogorean formula—"Knowledge is relative : man is, for man, the measure of the universe"—and dog for dog, doubtless, and cat for cat ; but not cat for dog, and *vice versa*. "Thinks," says the luminous Lewins, "are the only realities." "As a man thinketh, so is he," said Paul, the apostle. As a man (or a mouse) thinketh, so is his (or its) universe, says the Apostle Lewins.

The whole matter is explained by Mr. M'Taggart in the *Agnostic Annual*, with the most admirable lucidity, for the benefit of simple Secularists who are hatching into full-fledged Hylo-Idealists of the Agnostic order.

"Hylo-Idealism holds that our knowledge [or agnosticism, say] is the result of two factors—object and subject. The results [of this conjunction] are *thinks*, or sense-objects—the only realities for us. These *thinks* arise by the relativity between subject and object: they are the combination of stimulus, *plus* response to stimulus—[whether Scotch or Irish not stated]. Object *per se*, subject *per se*, they are not: they are the issue of both [with a *quantum sufficit* of the aforesaid stimulus]. Absolute knowledge, then, of subject or object we can never have [which is natural and inevitable agnosticism, as invented by Professor Huxley]."

After getting a thorough understanding of those and a dozen or two more theories of matter and thought, a man with any reasonable amount of brains naturally agnosticates.

Mr. M'Taggart, however, to do him justice, is a Spiritualist, in his way, as well as Hylo-Idealist and Agnostic. He admits—nay, he strenuously asserts—that

"The objective side of the universe is affected by the subjective side, the subjective by the objective; neither *was* before the other. Matter is affected by spirit (force), spirit by matter. Their union is the 'think' of the absolute. The material universe is this 'think,' and has become a reality to the absolute, just as much as space and time, trees and men, are our 'thinks,' and have become realities to us. Beyond this we cannot go. What is matter, or what is spirit, we cannot know; and what their point of contact is we may not even imagine. As, however, our world is clearly comprised, for us, not of things as they are, but as they become by the interaction of subject and object, so also we can conceive that the universe is what it is, only by the action and reaction of the subject and object of the absolute. The outcome, the universe, then, which is object to us, is the 'think' of the absolute, not the absolute itself. Under this luminous conception crude Materialism vanishes away like an evil dream, for

matter depends on spirit. Pure Idealism must bow its head, for spirit depends on matter."

We cannot do justice to our guide, philosopher, and friend, M'Taggart, without giving his final paragraph, showing how response to stimulus *plus* stimulus leads to Agnosticism.

"Everything," he kindly informs us, "the totality of all things is relative. They are the result of the relation of the two factors. What the relation is we know not, nor can we ever know. To know the relation our knowledge would cease to be relative; it would become the absolute knowledge of the absolute—the shadow would become the light. Herein is Agnosticism. We neither can know matter or spirit, *per se*, nor can we know their relation, their point of contact. Hylo-Idealistic Agnosticism refuses, therefore, to accept the dogmatics of their party—either of those who tell us what God is or is not, on the one hand, or of those who, with equal cocksureness and an equal want of premise on the other, tell us all about matter and its belongings. As the varying ego, in response to stimulus, does the ego, in proportion to its powers of response, babble forth and dogmatise concerning matter, force, and law. Pure Materialism is the Calvinism of philosophy. From equally inadequate premises it asserts equally positive knowledge concerning the unknown and the unknowable. Knowledge being only relative, we must regard all our perceptions, all our objects, as merely adumbrations of the truth—relative truth merely. Positive knowledge is shown to be a delusion and a snare; matter, force, law, cause, effect, *et hoc genus omne*, being but working hypotheses at the best. To the strictly logical mind, therefore, Agnosticism alone remains."

Then the luminous M'Taggart quotes the perspicuous Mr. Herbert Spencer, because, as he appropriately remarks, "The higher the organisation, the higher, the more adequate the response to stimulus." Mr. Spencer writes:—

"Pure Transcendentalism holds that space and time are forms of thought known *à priori*.

"Crude Realism holds that space and time are objective realities, forms of things, known *à posteriori*.

"Transfigured Realism [his own philosophy] holds that space and time are forms of things which have become forms of thought through organised and inherited experience of things."

Hylo-Idealism teaches that space and time are sense objects or "thinks," and, for us, as much objects as trees or men.

NOTES TOWARDS A HISTORY OF THE RISE IN
ENGLAND OF SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATION.

(WRITTEN IN 1879, BY A. M. H. W.)

(Continued from p. 376.)

IN 1853 a remarkable medium arrived in London from America, Mrs. Hayden. She held public sésances in her own lodgings, and private ones at the houses of inquirers. She was the first American medium who appeared in England. It was through her mediumship that various well known literary and distinguished persons, later on identified with the Spiritualistic movement in England, gained their first knowledge of the "raps," and of what is termed mediumship, directly or indirectly. Another medium from America, Emma Jay, a trance and inspirational-speaking medium, nearly at the same time, excited considerable interest amongst the early inquirers.

Two visitors to Mrs. Hayden were Professor De Morgan, and his wife, author of that philosophical and deservedly celebrated work on Modern Spiritualism, "From Matter to Spirit," long unfortunately out of print, the preface being written by Professor De Morgan.

Writing in 1863 "the results of their ten years' experience in Spirit-manifestations," Mrs. De Morgan says:—

"When a strange tale reached us twelve years ago of noises which had been heard in America, and attributed to spirits, everybody laughed. As the stories multiplied, a few persons in England began to think they must have some origin at least, and to wonder why, if spirits could rap in the United States, they could not do so in our own country. Then we began to have 'mediums,' people only in whose presence these seemingly fastidious spirits would make their appearance; and at length curiosity was still further excited by the appearance of a medium in London. Mrs. Hayden became the wonder of a day; but people fancied they could detect imposture, and though none was ever fairly proved, the interest flagged, and the medium returned to America, leaving sown the seed of a tree, the extent of whose growth has yet to be measured."—(From "Matter to Spirit," chap. i. p. 1.)

"A party of friends, many of them known in the literary world," writes Mrs. De Morgan in the following chapter, "permitted me to join them, and another friend, Mr. James—a man of unimpeachable truthfulness, undertook to arrange a meeting with Mrs.

Hayden, whom we were to visit at her lodgings, near Cavendish Square."

Thus does Mrs. De Morgan commence her interesting account of that first séance with Mrs. Hayden, which proved so important an event in the life of herself and of several others of "the party of friends." Mrs. De Morgan tells us that she has changed or suppressed all names connected with experiences related in her book. There appears, however, now, at least no reason for suppressing names. "Mr. James," was in fact the late Rev. James Smith, author of the "Divine Drama of History," and other remarkable works. I shall have occasion to refer later to this interesting man.

Mrs. Marshall also was a medium, whose séances were visited by inquirers. She was an Englishwoman, long resident in London. "I could tell some wonderful things heard and seen by a friend of mine at the house of Mrs. Marshall twenty-three years ago (1835), before the name of Spiritualism was invented," writes Mr. W. Wilkinson, in 1858, in the *Spiritual Telegraph*. Mrs. Marshall was a follower of Joanna Southcote, one of "the Church of the Woman."

When considering the rapid spread of the phenomena of Spiritualism in England, upon the advent of the first "mediums" from America, three predisposing causes for their rapid propagation must be taken into consideration. The existence of the "churches," as they called themselves, of the three religious bodies—the Swedenborgians, or the Church of the New Jerusalem; the Irvingites, or the New Apostolic Church; and the Southcottians, or the Church of Joanna, or of "the Woman." All three entirely distinct; all three in antagonism with each other, and with all other bodies, and yet all three pre-eminent "churches" of the Spirit origin and influence.

The Rev. James Smith in himself concentrated the knowledge and experience of these three religious bodies. For years studying the extraordinary manifestations of spirit-power occurring amongst the Irvingites and the "Church of Joanna," and deeply read in the philosophy of Swedenborg, as well as being acquainted with the most intellectual living representatives of the "Church of Emmanuel," he had drawn philosophical inferences from all these sources, which prepared him in an especial manner to welcome and foster the earliest mediumship in England. He had for years awaited the secularisation of the manifestation of Spirit-power, and

both by conversation and by his pen had sought from year to year to prepare the minds of intelligent and thoughtful persons for their reception. Any one who will turn to the pages of his periodical, *The Shepherd*; to the few numbers published of *The Spiritual Herald*, edited by him, for the express purpose of making known in England the progress of the manifestations in America, linking them on with the movement in England; to his highly philosophic work, "The Divine Drama of History and Civilisation;" and to his novel, published after his death, "The Coming Man," cannot fail to acknowledge the far-seeing, harmonious, and universal character of his mind.

From the body of the Swedenborgians came forth, as believers in the phenomena of Spirit-manifestation, Dr. Garth Wilkinson and his brother, Mr. William Wilkinson; also Mr. William White, author of the most elaborate "Life of Swedenborg" which has yet appeared.

I have already referred to the earnest study in England of Mesmeric phenomena previously to the time of the "Rochester knockings," and of the arrival of the first American medium. As in Germany and France, the development of clairvoyance soon showed itself in England in due course through patient prosecution of Mesmeric experiment. "Sensitives," as it was then the fashion to call them, once developed, the deeply interesting and instructive Mesmeric trance supervened. In the early days, before the arrival of Mrs. Hayden, three young ladies had developed extraordinary spiritual gifts, and in the private circle of their friends in London, through their power of vision, and inspirational addresses delivered by them when in the trance condition, awoke in many thoughtful and intellectual minds a deep and abiding interest. These three ladies—Mrs. Milner, the late Mrs. Nenner, wife of the late Professor Nenner of the Dissenters' College, St. John's Wood, and last, though by no means least, a lady who has ever preferred to remain unknown to the world by name, or simply designated "L. M.," these being the initials of her spirit-given name. These three ladies were acquainted with Mr. James Smith. They highly valued his friendship, and have expressed not infrequently, in warm terms, their debt of gratitude to this benevolent and philosophically-minded man for the influence which he exercised over their youth, inspiring them with lofty ideas and aspirations, and expanding their spiritual horizon. He, recognising the truth of these great gifts, sought to direct their

aspirations towards the high and the universal, and guarded them from the quicksands and rocks of individualism and literality in the exercise of their spiritual power.

The arrival in England of Mrs. Hayden brought into the ranks of Spiritualism Dr. Ashburner, already prepared, through his profound knowledge of Mesmeric phenomena ; and later, through him, Dr. Elliotson—both gentlemen, originally materialists, having become convinced of the truths of the teaching of Christ, through a perception of the existence of spirits and a spirit-world. A most striking account, written by Dr. Ashburner, of his first visit to Mrs. Hayden, and of his conversation through her with the spirit of his father, who gave most extraordinary tests of identity, entirely convincing the Doctor, may be read in the *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph*.

Robert Owen, of New Lanark, the well-known social philanthropist, of whom the papers at the time of his decease spoke as having lived the life of an Atheist, and in his extreme old age committed the unpardonable sin of becoming a Spiritualist, also visited Mrs. Hayden, and became, if not convinced fully upon his first visit, profoundly impressed. In the *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph* is an account by himself of Mr. Owen's visit to this remarkable medium. It will be remembered that his son, Robert Dale Owen, contributed to the literature of Spiritualism two invaluable books, "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World" and "The Debatable Land."

In April, 1855, appeared the first number of the little magazine above referred to. It is the earliest periodical in England devoted to the spread of a knowledge of the Spirit-manifestations in England. It is entitled *The Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph*, and was printed at Keighley, in Yorkshire, and published there by J. Rhodes, in the Market-place, as also in London and Edinburgh. It is highly instructive to turn over these volumes. They teem with material for a history of the rise of the movement of Modern Spiritualism in England. You have only to glance at the introductory article in No. 1, Vol. I., April, 1855, to perceive how earnest and active were the converts to the new gospel of good-tidings—

"Not long ago," says the writer of the introduction, "a few of us published a small pamphlet, entitled 'Spirit-Rapping Extraordinary,' containing a short sermon, and a small quantity of poetry, which we supposed were given by those invisibles, called spirits.

. . . . Since the publication of the said pamphlet, we have seen a great many proofs of its truth, quite sufficient, we think, to almost convince the most sceptical. We have seen it overturn Mr. Farady's theory of muscular action, by moving tables and giving language, with the hands of mediums placed on the surface of a dishful of water. We have frequently seen it change the mediumship from one person to another, sitting at the table, and give intelligent compositions through persons who did not believe in it. We have frequently seen it announce the names of parties unknown to any of us, telling us where they lived and where they died, and on inquiring we have found all correct; and, what may appear still more extraordinary, in two well-attested cases, the table moved without the contact of hands. Altogether, we may say, indeed, that we have seen it manifest an intelligence in moving tables, giving and solving riddles, giving advice, poetry, medical prescriptions, and a variety of other things, not only equal to, but superior to that of our most acute and intelligent friends. How the present production of the invisible may be received by the public we cannot tell, but we certainly think them a considerable improvement upon the last, and perseverance may, perhaps, produce something still superior."

Who these earnest men and women were who first started this excellent and unpretending periodical, we should greatly like to know; where, also, they originally received the spark of heavenly fire, which from these records appears with them to have transformed itself into no *ignis fatuus*, but calmly to have burnt as a flame of love and enlightenment upon the altar of their domestic lives. The movement appears to have spread ^{not} far and wide in the provinces, especially in the north of England, and even into Scotland. Robert Burns is the name attached to a good deal of verse printed in the *Yorkshire Telegraph*; nor is the verse despicable, but frequently has a wit, a wisdom, and a simplicity combined within it worthy, at least of the *nature*, if not always of the name of Robert Burns. The communications as given both in prose and verse, as from "the disembodied," are by no means of a poor order; and all the articles, whether written by the embodied or the *disembodied*, are filled with an elevated and aspirational spirit, and are consistently earnest in tone. Levity and "unseemly jesting" seem to have belonged to a later day and more fashionable surroundings.

There are articles upon subjects kindred to the movement and illustrative of it; such as biographical sketches of Swedenborg, of Wesley, of Luther, of Knox, etc., etc.; accounts of séances

held in various places; collections of supernatural incidents, stories, well authenticated, of hauntings, dreams, etc.; articles upon clairvoyance, mesmerism, upon seeing in crystals, together with references to the extraordinary experiences with crystals of Mr. Brown of Nottingham, and of Mr. Hockley of Croydon. Also, it is not long before controversies arise with newspapers and religious bodies and individuals on the subject of the "manifestations." As the numbers of the *Telegraph* increase, we find that the great war between Spiritualism and Anti-Spiritualism in its varied forms had already begun: there is Faraday's far-famed letter in the *Athenæum*, referred to again and again, whereby he sought to establish, upon the evidence of experiment, that the movement of tables was produced by unconscious movements on the part of the sitters; there is Dr. Lankester delivering in 1856 "the first of a course of lectures in Newcastle-on-Tyne upon 'Popular Scientific Errors,' in which he proceeds to expose the great sea-serpent, table-moving, and phrenology," etc., etc.; there are lectures of the Rev. Mr. Godfrey, showing how the Spirit-manifestations are the manifestations of the Father of all, etc., etc. Gradually, also, you find the pages of the *Telegraph* not alone enriched by articles taken bodily from the American publications, but by original articles which bear the initials of writers, later on identified fully with the movement, Dr. Garth Wilkinson, Mr. William Wilkinson, Mr. Elihu Rich (the author of various articles exhibiting much learning in the "Encyclopedia Metropolitana," in the volume entitled "Occult Sciences"), William Howitt, Thomas Shorter, etc., etc.

The *Spiritual Telegraph* gives a series of articles upon the manifestations of Mr. D. D. Home—or "Mr. Hume," as his name appears then to have been spelt. "Mr. Hume, a young gentleman, a native of Scotland, who has resided for many years in America, who is now upon a visit to the house of Mr. Rymer, a highly respectable solicitor residing in Ealing." In No. 7 of the *Spiritual Telegraph*, October, 1855, a letter of Home's is given, in which he describes his residence in the house of this gentleman, his interviews with Lord Brougham and Sir David Brewster, and, in conclusion, says that "Mrs. Trollope came with her son from Florence to London for the express purpose of witnessing the manifestations." Later numbers of the *Spiritual Telegraph* contain a series of papers, entitled, "Evenings with Mr. Hume and the Spirits," signed "Verax"—"Verax" unquestionably being no other than Dr. Garth Wilkinson.

In 1859 was commenced the *Spiritual Magazine*, edited in the first instance by Mr. William Wilkinson, and later on by Mr. Thomas Shorter until the year 1873, when it passed into the editorship of Dr. Sexton, and assumed a different aspect and character for the short remaining term of its existence. This magazine must be regarded as the most valuable storehouse of facts connected with Spiritualism which has yet appeared. Not alone in its pages may be found a continuous chronicle of the contemporaneous movement in England, on the Continent, and in America and Australia, but carefully written articles upon subjects connected with Spirit-manifestations in their historical and universal aspect, with many most valuable biographical sketches of men and women of note from foreign and other sources difficult of access for the general reader.

Amongst the contributors of original articles to the *Spiritual Magazine* throughout this period may be mentioned Mr. William Wilkinson, Dr. Wilkinson, Robert Dale Owen, William Howitt, Dr. Ashburner, Mr. Elihu Rich, Mr. Thomas Shorter (whose able articles were collected later into a valuable volume, entitled, "The Two Worlds"), Mr. Newton Crosland, Mr. Benjamin Coleman (whose contributions regarding Spiritualism and Spiritualists in America, as witnessed and known by himself during a visit to the United States, appeared later, also with additions, as a noteworthy volume, entitled, "Spiritualism in America"), Mr. D. D. Home, Baron Durckrick, Mr. S. C. Hall, Mrs. De Morgan, A. M. H. W. (myself), and other earnest workers in the cause whose names at the moment do not occur to me.

It remains to speak of various books produced at this period by divers writers, books of importance to the cause through diffusion of knowledge of the phenomena themselves, and by linking on these modern phenomena with the history of past manifestations of spirit-power.

"Light in the Valley," by Mr. Newton Crosland, published by Routledge, 1857.

"Footfalls on the Boundary of another World," by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen.

About this period, "Spirit-Drawing: a Personal Narrative," by William M. Wilkinson (the second edition bears the date 1864). F. Pitman, London.

"Confessions of Truth-Seeker," by Thomas Brevior (otherwise Thomas Shorter), 1859.

"The Two Worlds," by the same author, published somewhat later.

Papers collected from the *Spiritual Magazine*, Natural and Supernatural, 1861, by John Jones.

"From Matter to Spirit," by Mrs. De Morgan; with Preface by Professor De Morgan. Longmans, 1863.

"History of the Supernatural in all Ages and Nations," by William Howitt. Longmans, 1863.

"Incidents in My Life," by D. D. Home, 1864, &c.

MIRACLES.

MIRACLE, as defined in dictionaries, is, literally, "that which causes admiration or wonder"—and the word is used to describe "a prodigy: anything beyond human power and deviating from the common action of the laws of nature, becoming thereby a supernatural event."

The phenomena which we call Spiritual manifestations are therefore miracles in the proper sense of the word. The accounts of such miracles which we have already published in this *Record* fill many pages, and they are certified as true by many very competent living witnesses—by men of high intelligence, of deep science, and of undoubted probity and veracity.

Yet we have a man of culture, educated in our highest schools, an apostle of "Sweetness and Light," who has written a book, of which he has just published a second and somewhat condensed and expurgated edition,* to inform us—because it is rather difficult to prove a negative—that there are no miracles, and never have been; and that we must get along as well as we can without them.

"Christianity is immortal," he declares; "it has eternal truth, inexhaustible value, a boundless future. But our popular religion conceives the birth, ministry, and death of Christ as altogether steeped in prodigy, brimful of miracle; *and miracles do not happen.*"

* Literature and Dogma: an Essay towards a better apprehension of the Bible. By Matthew Arnold, formerly Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, and Fellow of Oriel College. London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1883.

"To re-enthroned the Bible as explained by our current Theology," says Mr. Matthew Arnold, "is absolutely and forever impossible!—as impossible as to restore the feudal system, or the belief in witches."

Mr. Arnold holds a Government appointment and enjoys a Government pension, and has a liberal leave of absence to lecture in America. The same Government has one Mr. Foote in prison for saying much the same thing in a different fashion, and keeps Mr. Bradlaugh out of his seat in Parliament for holding views a little more roughly pronounced than those of our pensioned professor of Culture and Sweetness and Light; which looks very much like allowing one man to steal a horse and sending another to prison for grinning over the hedge. Not that we wish to excuse Mr. Foote's indecencies, which were an unquestionable outrage, though no worse than some written ribaldries.

"The old traditional scheme of the Bible is gone," Mr. Arnold says; "miracles, the mainstay of popular religion, are touched by Ithuriel's spear. They are beginning to dissolve." But, eliminating the miracles, erasing every trace of the supernatural, rejecting every dogma, Mr. Arnold holds that there is considerable value in the ethics of the Bible, as well as in the Koran and the sacred writings of Buddhists and Brahmins. Christianity, omitting all that is distinctive, and especially all that is supernatural, he thinks may do something for culture and morality, for which there is, it must be confessed, no little need.

But the literature of the world is full of Supernaturalism, aside from its religion, or rather, we may say, the religious supernatural penetrates and pervades it everywhere. It presides in poetry from Homer to Shakespeare. Would Mr. Matthew Arnold take the ghosts of Banquo and the King out of "Macbeth" and "Hamlet," and all the spirits out of "The Tempest" and "Midsummer Night's Dream"?

Where would sculpture and painting be were there no legendary lore? The life of the race is full of the miraculous, and even the savage tribes, now fast fading out, swept from the world by the triumphs and vices of civilisation—by steam and alcohol—have their miraculous traditions and spirit manifestations.

The curious thing is that, while a man of science and culture is denouncing miracles as connected with Jewish and Christian faith, declaring that they "*do not happen*," and never did, we know and have daily experience that they are happening all about

us and all over the world. The tying of a perfect single knot upon an endless cord, as tested and photographed by Professor Zöllner at Leipzig, and repeated for Dr. Nichols in London, is as clear a miracle as any recorded in the Bible. The marvels witnessed by the Earls of Dunraven, by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, and certified by other most intelligent persons, as published in previous numbers of the *Record*, were miracles, in the strictest sense of the word. Some Bible miracles are of a more stupendous character than those examined, tested, and recorded by Professor Crookes, but no one can pretend that they were more real or more authentic. We can put Mr. Crookes into the witness-box and cross-examine him like a plaintiff in a breach of promise case, but we cannot hope to do this by Moses, unless under very favourable conditions. But we have abundant testimony, and are able at any time to give ocular, aural, and tangible proof of the performance of as real miracles, according to our quoted definition—of facts beyond and contrary to the common operation of the “laws of nature,” as any described in the legends of every age and country.

And what has been the origin of all these so-called legends? The word “legend” means simply something to be read. It was used for histories suitable for daily reading, and specially for the lives of the Saints, nearly all of which are full of miracles. These miracles in the lives of the Saints have been judicially verified with cross-examination of witnesses by the “Devil’s Advocate” specially employed to prove them false or unreliable when it was possible to do so.

As for the legends of supernatural events in poetry, some are facts, some facts embellished by fancy, some founded on fact, and many perhaps purely imitative or imaginary. Here, under our hand, is a very nice one—a story of physical manifestations—which is, at least, *ben trovato*. It is one of the shorter poems in a dainty volume of verse, filled with a fine fancy and much lyrical ability, entitled, “The Legend of Allandale and Other Poems, by Felix Morterra.”* Of course a pseudonym conceals the poet’s personalities, which, though we have the happiness of knowing him very well, we are not authorised to reveal. The legend is of a Jewish Rabbi, whose character might have been suggested by that of Sir Moses Montefiore.

* London : C. Kegan Paul & Co. 1880.

Read then the pretty, picturesque, and, we think, most charming legend of—

RABBI AMRAM.

In the olden days, six hundred passing summers since have flown,
Lived an ancient Jewish rabbi in the city of Cologne.
O'er the seat of Hebrew learning long he held his patient rule,
And from far and near the scholars crowded to his famous school.
All his wisdom calm respected, all his presence grave revered—
Piercing eyes and noble forehead, locks of white and snowy beard :
When he passed the scoff was silenced : e'en the meanest ne'er was known,
Where he moved, to mock or menace, growl the curse or cast the stone.
Nor alone among his brethren—far abroad had spread his fame,
Foreign realms and distant cities honoured Rabbi Amram's name.
E'en the Christians, when dissensions, rising, raging, wrecked their peace,
Craved the rabbi's cooler counsels, till contending cries should cease.
Praised was he by mean and mighty, loved alike of old and young,
And the youth of many nations eager on his teachings hung.
Thus his years respected ripened, till their final term drew nigh,
And the good man heard the summons, knew his time was come to die.

Then he called his weeping scholars, bade his mournful brethren all
Mind them of the coming sorrow, of the change must soon befall ;
And he said, "I charge you, brethren, by the God of Abraham's name,
That you bear my lifeless body to the town from whence I came.
There in fair Mayence, my birthplace—mark me well !—my bones bestow,
Let me slumber where my fathers rest their native earth below."
Spake the rabbi,—then a murmur through the whisp'ring mourners ran,
And they sighed—"Alas, dear master, do thy bidding scarce we can.
Well thou knowest how the Gentiles vex the holy seed and spoil :
Vain it were their grace to crave, our dead to lay in distant soil.
Still our burials are, and secret, scarce the hearts bereaved that mourn
Take their gloomy way untroubled by the stranger's spite and scorn."

For a moment paused uncertain and distressed the dying man,
Then his pallid features raising, thus with trembling lips began :—
"Since my hest you dare not follow, in a boat upon the wave
Place me in my burial vesture ; o'er the helm the sign engrave
Of th' unspoken symbol sacred—faithfully my words obey ;—
Leave it there to float unguided, let it bear me where it may !
As my dying charge you cherish, may your coming years be blest,
And in His good time, our Father grant you with the sires to rest !"
As he made the sign of blessing with his hand, the good man died ;
And the mourners left the chamber, sad and still at eventide.

Ere the morrow's morn they laid him in his shroud, upon the bier ;
Many a prayer was whispered o'er him, on his corse fell many a tear.
When the twilight shadows deepened, lay a shallop on the tide,
And the dead at silent midnight bore they to the water-side.
On through close and narrow by-ways, down each less frequented street,
Paced the bearers, hushed and trembling, moving slow with noiseless feet ;

At the river's brink they halted, there, with careful reverent hand,
 In the boat they placed the body—launched it forward from the land.
 O'er the bier were traced the letters of the Tetragrammatōn,
 And the boat of doom departed on its awful way alone.
 Hands were clasped as through the darkness sped the shallop from the shore,
 And they sighed—"Alas, our father, must we see thy face no more?"

Draped with black the death-barge floated, clothed from stem to stern in black,
 As the rippling waves it parted, bearing on its unknown track.
 Lo! a marvel,—ere it vanished, lost in dimness from their sight,
 Beaming o'er the mystic letters, shone a pale and silvery light;
 Like a sheeny rainbow lustre on the hallowed dead it lay,
 As the boat, its course slow bending, *up* the river took its way.
 Upward 'gainst the rapid current did that sacred vessel glide,
 Far as wondering eyes could follow, on the midstream's swirling tide.
 Gazed the Jews on one another, as they left the darkened shore,
 And rejoiced that God was with them as their sires in days of yore.

Slowly, slowly, through the darkness, did the shallop onward wind,
 Foamed upon her stem the current, closed the parted wave behind.
 Over stream and misty meadows shone the morning's earliest ray;
 Past the river banks reed-covered made the floating speck its way;
 And the crews of passing vessels, on their various course intent,
 Gazed astonished, marvelled greatly, what that wondrous portent meant.
 "Sure," they said, "a great enchanter travels onward to his doom,
 Whom his spell-bound spirits carry to a distant caverned tomb."

When the sun was high in heaven, where the seven mountains rise,
 Lave their bases in the waters, raise their summits toward the skies,
 On the shadowy convent islet glanced the sisters from the shore,
 Saw the wondrous vessel nearing, guided nor by sail nor oar.
 Half in terror, half in reverence, many a hasty prayer they said,
 As the bier was borne before them, where the features of the dead,
 Calm upon the pillow resting, passed beyond and out of sight—
 E'en the breezes fresh were stilled, nor raised his locks of silver white.
 "See," they said, "some holy man is borne along by hands unseen!"
 For his soul a hymn they chaunted, while the full notes swelled between.

Wherefore should my story linger o'er the dead man's silent way,
 As the noontide changed to even, till the twilight shadows lay
 On the river, while the boat along the darkening waters pass'd,
 And the lambent halo's glimmer o'er the mighty Name was cast?

Feasted high the robber chieftain in his hall in Sonneck Tower,
 When the noiseless death-boat nearing, swept the troubled waters o'er.
 Downward rushed he to the river, there unmoored with fiendish glee,
 Crying, "We will see who ventures here, nor seeks a pass from me!"
 Dashed his oars approaching nearer, as the voyager he would hail—
 "Ghostly Greybeard, whither farest thou? Bide awhile and tell thy tale!"
 Answered him his awe-struck comrade, saying, "Captain, let it be!
 Deeds enow of blood and rapine on our guilty heads have we!"

But the ruffian, wild with wine and fierce of spirit, would not hark,
 Stretched his hand with rage profane to stay perforce the stranger bark,—
 Scarce his grasp had seized the gunwale, changed his shout to curse and yell,
 As the robber's right arm quivering, palsied to his side it fell.

Dark it closed, the morrow's even, over river, wood, and strand,
 Where the rugged crags projecting bar the stream on either hand :
 There too oft the mountain echoes bear the drowning wretches' cry,
 As among its rocks the river all night long winds wailing by.
 Deep and narrow is the channel, and the flood close 'prisoned swells
 Where above the fresh vines cluster round the tower of Ehrenfels.
 Yet though one by one the vessels make their dangerous way in fear,
 See, a right its unseen helmsman doth the spectral shallop steer !
 And the rumour flew before it of the miracle divine,
 Of a boat, unguided, bearing parted saint to distant shrine.

All the men of busy Mayence, crowded early to the quay,
 Nobles, craftsmen, monks and bishops, eager this strange thing to see.
 Soon behold—the vessel nearing—scarce they trust their wondering eyes,
 Each one to his neighbour whisp'ring, or aghast in mute surprise!
 See the Hebrews, grouped together, stand apart with anxious eye,
 Watch the death-boat, veering towards them, to the sandy shore draw nigh!
 But the moment that the Christians sought to bring it to the ground,
 Ere they touched, the boat enchanted backward fell or headed round.
 Till the bishop's word was spoken, to the Jews he gave command—
 "Take the vessel, marvel-freighted, draw it closer to the land!"
 Readily to them it yielded, while united voices cried—
 "'Tis the blessed Rabbi Amram, borne of angels up the tide,
 That with us should rest his ashes, in Mayence where he was bred ;
 Therefore grant, O noble bishop, that we lay him with our dead !"
 Spake the Bishop—"Heaven forbid, that through our Christian city's street,
 He—a Jew, perchance a wizard—should be borne,—it were not meet !
 On the river's sandy margin, rather, let them leave the bier,
 And to shield from sun and tempest, o'er it there a shelter rear."

All was done as he commanded—on the shore the bier they spread ;
 And a roof, erected o'er it, shelter yielded for the dead.
 Long time there without the city, on the barren sands it lay,
 And the Jews at early morning thither went to weep and pray.
 Till at length the youth of Israel, grieved that there his rest should be—
 He, whom most they loved to honour,—came at midnight silently,
 Bore him through the sleeping city, to the spot where lay their dead,
 There his mortal rest made ready—laid him in his last long bed.
 No man asked them of their doing, none so bold to bid them stay,
 Till their work of love accomplished, home they took their twilight way.

Long did this most wondrous story down the Rhenish valleys ring,—
 How the blessed Amram, guarded by the might of Israel's King,
 'Gainst the stream, despite the stranger, reached the city whence he came ;
 And, to-day, a Christian temple bears the ancient rabbi's name.

THE TESTIMONY OF SERJEANT COX.

THE following clear and accurate testimony of a clear-headed, practical, and eminently sensible English judge—the late Edward Cox, Serjeant-at-Law, Recorder of Portsmouth, Deputy Assistant-Judge at Middlesex, Justice of the Peace, and Deputy-Lieutenant for Middlesex; founder of the *Law Times*, the *Field*, the *Queen*, and other popular and successful newspapers; and author of several works on Science and Law—was published some years ago in the *Spiritualist*, and seems to us, from its source and character, to be well worth laying before our readers, as one of the clearest testimonies ever given, and by a man qualified, if ever man was, to give a clear and utterly reliable statement of facts. Serjeant Cox was a clear-headed, very prudent, but also an honest, brave man, who had the courage of his convictions. Mr. Harrison, editor of the *Spiritualist*, says:—

“In the early days of Mesmerism, and at a time when public ignorance covered the subject with obloquy, he investigated that branch of psychology, discovered it to be true, and with unswerving faithfulness fought for it to the last, both in public and in private. When the rising star of Spiritualism made its appearance, he likewise investigated, and testified to the truth of each of its almost unbelievable phenomena as fast as he obtained good personal evidence of its reality. He died November 28, 1879, at his residence, Moat Mount, near Hendon.”

We had personal conversations with Mr. Serjeant Cox, not long before his death, in which he related some of his experiences, which were of a very striking character, and which removed every doubt of the reality of spirit-life and power. The following is his clear, lawyer-like testimony as to the genuineness of Psychography or Spirit-writing as later examined by Professor Zöllner in the presence of *Henry Slade*:—

“Having undertaken to examine without prejudice or prepossession, and report faithfully, without favour, in a purely judicial spirit, any alleged psychological phenomena that might be submitted to me as President of the Psychological Society of Great Britain, I narrate without comment what I witnessed at a sitting with Dr. Slade this afternoon (August 8th, 1876).

“I sat alone with him, at three o'clock, in a room at 8 Upper Bedford Place, Russell Square, into which the sun shone brightly, at a table about five feet by four, having four legs, no ledge below,

and no cloth upon it. Dr. Slade sat at one side of this table, sideways, so that his legs and feet were not under the table, but his whole body being fully in my view as he faced me. I sat at the side, the corner of the table between us. As I sat I could see half-way below the table, and by moving my head slightly I could see the whole space below, which was wholly exposed in full daylight. An ordinary drawing-room chair was about six inches from the table on the opposite side, six feet from Dr. Slade. A heavy arm-chair was in the corner of the room, about the same distance from him and from the table. A slate of the ordinary school size and a piece of slate pencil were upon the table.

"Instantly, upon taking our seats, very loud rapping came upon the floor. This was followed by a succession of furious blows upon the table, jarring my hands as they were lying upon it. These blows were repeated at any part of the table desired, by merely touching that spot with the finger, while the blows, as forcible as if given with a sledge-hammer, were being made. Dr. Slade's hands were on the table upon my hands, and his whole body to his feet was fully before my eyes. I am certain that not a muscle moved. Then he took the slate, after I had carefully inspected it to be assured that no writing was upon it, and placing there a piece of slate-pencil, the size of a small grain of wheat, he pressed the slate tightly below, but against the slab of the table. Presently I heard the sound as of writing on a slate. The slate was removed, and on it a zig-zag line was drawn from end to end.

"At this moment the chair that I had described as standing by the table was lifted up to a level with the table, held in that position for several seconds, and then dropped to the floor. While the chair was so suspended in the air I carefully noted Dr. Slade. It was far beyond his reach. But his hands were under my hands, and his feet were fully in view near my own, on the side of the table opposite to that on which the chair had risen.

"While I was taking note of his position, at this moment a hand rudely grasped my knee on the opposite side to where Dr. Slade was seated, and his hands were still in mine on the table.

"Blows of a more gentle kind upon the table, attended with a remarkable quivering of it, announced, as he said, that his wife was present, and desired the slate. After the slate had been carefully cleaned, it was laid upon the top of the table, with a like piece of pencil under it. Upon the slate he placed his right hand, and I placed my left hand, and with my other hand I held his left hand as it lay upon the table. As my hand lay upon the slate, I could feel, and I did also distinctly hear, something writing upon it. The communication was evidently a long one; but before I report the result, I desire to note here a remarkable

phenomenon, to my mind the most suggestive that attended this experiment.

"It is necessary clearly to understand the position of the parties, therefore I repeat it.

"Dr. Slade and myself sat face to face. One hand of each of us was laid upon the slate. The side of the slate that was being written upon was pressed by us against the table. Our second hands were linked together and lay upon the table. While this position was preserved, the writing proceeded without pause. When Dr. Slade removed his hand from mine it ceased instantly, and as instantly was renewed when his hand and mine met. This experiment was repeated several times, and never failed.

"Here, then, was a chain or circle formed by my arms and body and Dr. Slade's arms and body, the slate being between us, my hand at one end of it, his hand at the other end, and between our hands, and upon the slate that connected them, the writing was. When the chain was broken, forthwith the writing ceased. When the chain was re-formed, the writing was at once resumed. The effect was instantaneous. In this curious fact we must seek the clue to this psychological mystery.

"Some rapid rappings indicating that the writing was finished, the slate was lifted, and in a clear and perfectly distinct writing the following was read. It filled the whole side of the slate:—

"'Dear Serj.,—You are now investigating a subject that is worthy of all the time you or any other man of mind can devote to its investigation. When man can believe in this truth, it will in most cases make him a better man. This is our object in coming to earth, to make man and woman better, wiser, and purer.—I am, truly, A. W. SLADE.'

"While I was reading this a hand again grasped my knee furthest from Dr. Slade, whose hands were at that moment holding the slate that I might copy the writing. As I wrote, a hand, which I saw distinctly, came from under the table, seized my waistcoat, and pulled it violently.

"Seeing this, I took the pencil with which I was copying the words, and laid it at the edge of the table farthest from Dr. Slade, and far beyond his reach, the end of the pencil projecting about two inches over the ledge. I asked if the hand would take the pencil. Forthwith a hand came from under the table, seized the pencil, and threw it upon the floor. I again asked that it would pick up the pencil and bring it to me. In a minute it was brought and put upon the table by my side. I saw the hand that brought it as distinctly as I could see my own. It was a small hand, seemingly that of a woman.

"Again the slate was cleaned and laid upon the table as before, my hand upon it. In a few seconds the following sentence was written. Considerable power was used in this writing, and I

could distinctly feel the pressure of the pencil upon the slate, and its motion, as every word was written :—

“‘I am Dr. John Forbes. I was the Queen’s physician. God bless you.
J. FORBES.’

“When I was reading this, the hand again came from under the table, and seized the sleeve of my coat, and tried to pull my arm down, but I resisted, and it disappeared. Then it came up again, as if from my legs, and caught the eye-glass that was hanging from my neck, and opened it. During all these phenomena, Dr. Slade’s hands were before me on the table, and his feet full in my view upon the floor. The hand on each occasion came from the side of the table opposite to where Dr. Slade was sitting. He was seated on my left, and the hand came and seized me on my right leg, in a position impossible to him. The hand I saw was not half the size of Dr. Slade’s hand. It touched my hand three times, and I could feel that it was warm, soft, and moist, and as solid and fleshy as my own.

“Again the slate was cleaned and held under the table, tight against the wood, one-half of it projecting beyond the edge, so that I might be assured that it was tightly pressed against the wood; but the slate was seized, and with great force drawn away, and rapidly raised above me and placed upon my head. In this position the sound of writing upon it was distinctly heard by me. On removing it, I found written upon it the following words :—

“‘Man must not doubt any more, when we can come in this way.
J. F., M.D.’

“Then the large arm-chair rushed forward from the corner of the room in which it had been placed to the table.

“Again the slate was placed under the table, and projecting from it. A hand twice seized and shook my leg, both of the hands of Dr. Slade being at the moment before me, and his whole person visible.

“Thus ended this experiment. All that I have reported was *done*, that is certain. How it was done, and by what agency, is a problem for psychology to solve. For my own part I can only say that I was in the full possession of my senses; that I was wide awake; that it was in broad daylight; that Dr. Slade was under my observation the whole time, and could not have moved hand or foot without being detected by me.

“That it was not a self-delusion is shown by this, that any person who chooses to go, may see almost the same phenomena. I offer no opinion upon their causes, for I have formed none. If they be genuine, it is impossible to exaggerate their interest and importance. If they be an imposture, it is equally important that the trick should be exposed in the only way in which trickery can be explained, by doing the same thing—and showing how it is done.”

*AGNOSTIC TESTIMONY TO SPIRIT
MANIFESTATIONS.*

DR. NICHOLS has sent to the publisher of the *Spiritual Record* the following letter from Mr. Charles Delolme, who has been for years an active member of the London Secularist Societies, and a frequent contributor to Secular and Agnostic periodicals. It is the testimony of a very intelligent and entirely honest man, who has set his fellow Secularists the good example of not denouncing what he has never examined, and of following the good advice, even though found in the Bible—"Prove all things ; hold fast to that which is good."

Here is his letter :—

48 Rathbone Place, Oxford Street, W.,
September 11, 1883.

DEAR SIR,—I venture to think there must be many inquirers into Spiritualism who would be glad—if resident in London, especially those who, like myself, have been led to other views by the overwhelming record of facts as narrated in the *Spiritual Record*—to know that for 2s. 6d. (*sic*), and an introduction as to respectability, and *bona-fide* intent, they can obtain a glimpse, substantial and beyond measure impressive, of "the other side," now veiled to the eye of mortals under ordinary conditions.

Such was my happy lot last Sunday evening. Although unprovided with a due introduction, and only knowing of Mr. Husk through *The Medium* as a Spiritualist, on presentation of a visiting card, I had no difficulty with the amiable hostess.

In a remote part of Peckham Rye, I found Mr. Cecil Husk, of 20 Hazlewood Terrace, Maxted Road, under whose mediumship I was to have the delight of my first séance. Eleven ladies and gentlemen had assembled at about eight o'clock, and soon after the entry of Mr. Husk, sadly blind, and needing his careful wife to lead him, linked hands round a table occupying nearly the whole of a small room, so much, indeed, that it was impossible to pass round at one corner or by the fire-place when the company was seated ; in fact, there was no clear passage at all.

I need hardly recount to you all I witnessed that evening, and if I never chance to be present at another séance, the events of that one will be for mortal life graven on my memory. The light touches all round by spirit hands ; the music-box wound up and set a-going ; the æolian harp or zither floating round and round the room, now resting on my shoulders, now at the ceiling, discoursing the while the most lovely music.

Then was heard the rough voice of the spirit "Irresistible," who afterwards showed his veiled form all over the table to each and all by means of the luminous slates, as also his hands, full size, and then diminished or contracted to the dimensions of a finger nail.

Then came "John King" with his hearty greetings and "God bless you!" I told him I was rather deaf, so he took up the speaking trumpet and shouted out as if he was on the quarter-deck in a storm, close to my ear, "*Do you hear that?*" No one can mistake the tone of that voice. He appeared afterwards holding a small round phosphorescent lamp, and materialised as to more than half his figure, with two Indians; one of them, "Lightfoot," had previously visited us on the table, and within three inches of me, I should say; I plainly discerned his head, feathers, and nose. He also sounded the war-whoop.

An iron ring was also partly, then fully, got on to the hand of a visitor by no mortal means, while his fingers were linked with his neighbour's and the medium's. Finally, a large sack, obtained by the spirits from an adjoining closet, was placed over the head of one of the company. Twice during the séance a match was struck by desire of the spirits to light up. The usual collection was made afterwards.

Hoping the *Record* to which you contribute so largely is answering expectations,—I am, dear Sir, ever faithfully yours,

CHARLES DELOLME.

Dr. T. L. Nichols.

P.S.—The Indian spirits produced beautiful perfume as recorded in "Hafed;" also, the spirit voices were direct, and certainly not those of the medium or of any visitor.

Dr. Nichols has already given an account of a séance with Mr. Husk at his (Dr. N.'s) own house, and under careful test conditions; but we think the testimony of a professed, and evidently honest Secularist like Mr. Delolme is of special value.

Thirty-nine young ladies "graduated" at Vassar College at the close of last term—five of whom, *Woman's Journal* says, made the dresses they wore at the ceremony. A Lady Professor is Principal of the Denver School of Mines, and a practical assayer. Two teams of ladies, one of blondes, and the other brunettes, are practising for a base ball tour—which in America does for cricket. Also, an American lady has been admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of the United States—one of the highest honours of the profession. Women are honoured in all new countries, partly because there are so few among the early emigrants.

TWO AMERICAN MEDIUMS.

“HOW blessings brighten as they take their flight!” some poet says. The last number of *Mind and Matter*, a somewhat too fervent *Spiritualist* weekly paper, lately published in *Philadelphia*, U.S.A., had in its correspondence very clear and evidently accurate accounts of two celebrated mediums, with one of whom the writer had some acquaintance, several years ago, in London.

We called our contemporary too fervent. Every one has his own special idiosyncrasies; and one of the editor of *Mind and Matter* is to speak his mind with more freedom than the law allows. The old maxim was, “The greater the truth, the greater the libel.” Of course we know nothing about the facts in the case of Mr. Roberts, but a New York jury has given a verdict of three thousand dollars and six cents damages against him in each of two cases of libel, which has necessitated a suspension of his paper, and, for some reason we do not understand, his removal to New York. He says one of the jury explained the curious dollar and cent verdict by saying that they gave the six thousand dollars to punish him for being so abusive, and the odd twelve cents, or sixpence, to repair damage to character.

We wish our impetuous friend better luck next time. Being a trained and very clever lawyer, he really ought to keep out of such difficulties.

The first article we copy is one from a Cincinnati correspondent on—

“THE ALLEN BOY MEDIUM.

“The Allen boy medium has been in Cincinnati for about two weeks. Although he is still called the Allen boy, he is quite a mature man, and has his wife with him. He is a good physical medium, and his séances are very interesting and trustworthy.

“I attended one of them on last Wednesday night, at the house of Mr. Bowman, the lecturer for the Union Spiritualists. The circle of sitters around a large round centre table, were about seven in number, and very harmonious, as they were all experienced Spiritualists, ladies and gentlemen. The room was rendered intensely dark, and it was emphatically a dark circle. Very soon the demonstrations commenced, after the company around the table had joined hands, including the medium himself, who sat between two ladies, or rather a lady on one side, and a young girl,

a daughter of Mr. Bowman, on the other—the wife of the medium sat on one side of the table away from her husband, the medium. Tom, a facetious spirit controlling the séances, began by announcing to us in independent voice and ejaculation, that they could not promise a great deal to-night, but would do the best they could.

“Soon the music began, the instruments being a very large wire strung cithern or harp, or dulcimer as the company called it—a guitar and a bell. The large dulcimer was performed upon exceedingly well by the spirits, and they would play any tune called for by any one in the circle, and so with the guitar—the bell being used as an accompaniment when proper.

“Throughout the whole evening, these instruments were played upon, seemingly by various spirits. A brother Samuel of mine came, shook my hand energetically several times, and announced himself by name. Among other things, knowing that he was quite a musician in life, I asked him if he could play upon the dulcimer, and he said he could. I requested him to perform a tune. Immediately the wires of the dulcimer, fingered without any doubt by my spirit brother, executed the beautiful tune of the song of ‘Gates Ajar,’ to the pleasure and delight of us all. The spirits were all very accommodating in the musical part of the performances of the evening, and gave satisfaction and gratification to us all; while many of them seemed to be busy taking the hands of the individuals of the circle, and saying good words aloud for them, and manipulating in all sorts of ways those who sat near the medium. Mrs. Roberts, the lady who sat on the right of the medium, seemed for sometime to be the subject and object of the spirit controls’ attention. These were the spirit Tom, and another more serious and sober spirit, calling himself Holland. Tom it seems, had been as a mortal, a slave in the South, and at eighteen years of age, had been kicked to death by his cruel and inhuman master, but he talked to me in the circle, and said he had no resentment against his master, that he had been in the spirit-world these many years, and it made now no difference how he came there. Tom was quite facetious, and he made many remarks in a sportful and jocular way which pleased all of us very much. He seemed to like to be with us; indeed, he said to one, he took more pleasure as a spirit in being in the circle with us, than we did with him and his performances, and he loved to be with us and do all he could. He was certainly very pleasant and agreeable in his efforts to entertain us all, and quite *au fait*.

“At the request of the controls, Tom and Holland, I changed my seat, and took Mrs. Roberts’ place on the right of the medium, the spirits saying that they could thus obtain more power; and curious enough, at least so far as I was concerned, the sequel proved so, for never did I get such a manifestation from spirits

over my head and shoulders, and face, and arms, and hands, in all my spirit experience, and they almost overpowered me in their caresses and endearments. The spirit of my brother Samuel took the pencil and paper lying on the table, and wrote me a message, and literally chucked the paper writing into my hand. My wife also wrote a message on another leaf of the paper, and this was thrust into my bosom under my vest, and Tom scribbled a sort of a picture of a human face, and thrust it under my vest. I requested my brother Samuel to write me a message on my exposed white shirt bosom. No sooner said than done—all the company hearing the writing going on, and I myself both feeling and hearing. When I got to my home after the séance was over, I looked at my shirt bosom, and across it, in large, legible black written letters, was this, which I read to my wife—‘I am with you.—Sam’l.’ I regarded the manifestation with much satisfaction.

“During the whole sitting, there was considerable talk of a familiar kind by the spirits, and the voices were entirely independent of the medium, that of the spirit Tom being tenor in its compass, while Holland spoke with a baritone voice. Tom said to me, ‘Judge, would you like me to play the drum for you?’ I answered ‘yes,’ and immediately he commenced rattling in splendid imitation of the rat-a-taps of a snare drum over the wooden body of the dulcimer instrument, while he whistled the tunes in imitation of the fife. He said he wished he had a fife, and he would show us what excellent music he could make upon that. Said I, ‘Why, Tom, can you spirits play upon the wind instruments?’ ‘Oh yes,’ replied he, ‘very easily, and if I had a fife here I would show you.’ The séance lasted for over an hour, and when the lamp was again lighted, the company found, to their great surprise, the great, big, weighty dulcimer, weighing at least twenty-five pounds, and two chairs lying over it, upon the top of the centre table, around which we all sat. These things had been bodily lifted from another part of the room over the heads of the circle, and placed upon the table. This ended the interesting séance, and we went to our homes very much gratified and edified by the spirits and their manifestations.

“Mr. Allen has been a medium from his birth. He and his good wife have called at my office and my residence several times, and I have learned from himself much of his history. He is now about thirty-two years of age. His childhood and boyhood, as all Spiritualists in the East know, was distinguished for spirit manifestations. Even when in the cradle, an infant, it was a fact that his cradle was frequently rocked and kept rocking by his controlling spirits, to keep him as a baby quiet and peacefully sleeping; and during his boyhood, many strange things occurred with him all through his boyhood life. One of these was, he would mount the seat of a large two horse waggon near the barn of the

farm-yard where he lived, and without horses, the waggon would move around the yard, as if hauled by the horses, and many other like occurrences of a very strange character have taken place with him. He was born a medium, as all good mediums are. They take their divine gifts from birth, and they have the attendance of their spirit guides from such a time, as the Allen boy has had the spirits Tom and Holland with him from his birth.

"Mr. Allen is a good and trustworthy instrument in the hands of his spirits for interesting physical manifestations, and we advise the people to witness them. He and his wife are residing with Mrs. Roberts, No. 203 George Street, during their stay here. We wish him success.

"A. G. W. C.

"Cincinnati, Nov. 3rd, 1883."

No one can doubt that this is a straightforward, thoroughly honest letter. Many of our readers will remember Col. Olcott's account of the Allen boys and their manifestations when he visited them at their home in the State of Vermont, and spent some weeks in a very thorough investigation of their extraordinary manifestations. The facts, indeed, are beyond all question, and beyond any suspicion of fraud.

The other letter, by an American physician, gives an account of a séance with the musical medium, Mr. Jesse Sheppard.

A MEMORABLE SEANCE—ASTOUNDING MANIFESTATIONS.

"Permit me to trespass on your valuable space in giving expression to a few thoughts suggested by Mr. Jesse Sheppard's remarkable séance of Friday evening, October 26th.

"In order that your readers may fully appreciate my sentiments in this connection, I will state that I have but recently returned from a protracted tour in Europe, where I went with the two-fold purpose of psychological research and to test leading mediums of Great Britain and the Continent. Without going further, I may as well say that until the date of the above séance (notwithstanding all my remarkable experiences in this country and abroad), I remained an obdurate sceptic and materialist, having witnessed nothing warranting a positive conviction of spirit return. Although I had heard much of Mr. Sheppard's séances, I had made up my mind that they were about like many other musical séances I had attended, and so concluded not to bother myself with a repetition and corresponding waste of time. I must, however, be candid enough to say that I was finally led to attend the séance from a mere motive of curiosity, and I now date a spiritual awakening from that hour. On arriving, finding the room thronged with people, I felt fortunate in having previously purchased a ticket.

"I presume your readers are already acquainted with the

modus operandi of Mr. Sheppard's séances, and desire only to state what were my feelings during the marvellous performance. When all were seated in the circle, and Mr. Sheppard had taken his seat at the piano, there was a manifest dignity and fitness characteristic of the great personal power of the medium. Immediately upon the lights being extinguished I was fanned, and cold gusts blew about me. Soon after, the guitar was carried about the room, playing the hymn, 'There is a Happy Land,' while the audience were singing simultaneously with the playing of the air on the piano by the medium. And right here I may remark that this manifestation of itself would have startled me without anything else, and from my knowledge of the guitar I cannot divest myself of the conviction that a separate and individual agency was required to manipulate that instrument in contradistinction to the piano, for the guitar was *distinctly played, not strummed*. This is an important point to begin with. I have attended many musical séances, but never before heard the guitar *played*.

"After this came a brilliant fantasia upon the piano by a control supposed to be Donizetti. It certainly, in point of thorough bass and counter-point, equalled if not surpassed the recorded music of this great master.

"The next manifestation was still more striking, namely, the playing of the harp, guitar, and piano at one and the same time in perfect unison. The harp and guitar were floated above the sitters, while a vigorous performance was kept up on the piano. The instruments passed in front of me on several occasions, and were all the while discoursing celestial harmony. Be it remembered, the instruments were not strummed, but elegantly and effectively played upon.

About this time voices began to speak to different persons in the circle, and a voice came directly to me, calling me by name. This was most astonishing, as I was an entire stranger to the house and audience. Following this came other full names of those who have long since passed away. This was the only occasion on which I ever received a personal test in the direct voice.

"Many other manifestations rapidly followed, when the voices announced the great Egyptian march. In all my musical experiences at home and abroad, I have never listened to anything so unapproachingly, grandly *thrilling*; the whole room seemed to vibrate the matchless melody. But more was yet to follow.

"We were treated to what appeared to be a duet between those immortal artistes, Mad. Bosio and Sig. Lablache, which, for vocal power, finish, and technique, surpassed anything I ever heard in the grand opera houses of Europe.

"The séance from first to last was an unqualified triumph for spirits and medium.

WM. H. BARCLAY, M.D.

"605 South Seventh St., Philadelphia, Nov. 5, 1883."

THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT AS TAUGHT BY SPIRITS.

THAT spirits are dependent on the medium and the circle for their power, or rather means of expression, is certainly true; but mediums and members of circles have unconscious, and, in a sense, undeveloped powers which enable spirits to give expression to what is quite contrary to the conscious belief of mediums and sitters. I have received assertions from spirits that re-incarnation was a fact in their own experience, when the medium was most positive that re-incarnation was false and non-existent.

I once asked a spirit who spoke with the direct voice, if re-incarnation were a fact. At the moment the street was filled with excursionists from the black country—a very rude, undeveloped class of people. The spirit replied to my question—"You have been re-incarnated; but these people outside in the street have just come up from the brutes."

I said—"Is the transition accomplished in this world, or in the spiritual world?" I received no reply then, but sometime after another spirit said to me—"No man is ever born of a beast."

For some time this formula was repeated, and then there was given a remarkable discourse, the prominent features of which I will try to reproduce. The spirit said—

"The earth is of God. The WORD is an expression of the spiritual or creative power. The WORD, the LOGOS, the CHRIST, the 'Immanuel—God with us,' begins life on the earth by simple organism. We do not talk of time in this connection; of the time before organism, or of the time in which the simplest, crudest, coarsest organism was inaugurated. It would make your brain fail to try to conceive of time in this relation, and yet time is involved in it as certainly as day succeeds day; and organism goes on, being accomplished, becoming more and more a complicated matter, both as regards sentient life and the body of this life, which is the earth. The enormous vegetation and the saurian life of the planet were inaugural. Then came the projecting of faculties in forms—finer and more capable of rehearsing, so to speak—for a more complex, and finally for human life. As the writer makes parts of letters before he writes words, so a faculty found its form; and after rehearsal of many, each in its form, they were united, making a more complex being. A

trilobite is far from the complex and dignified life of the dog, but without the first you would not have the last.

"Each exhibition of creative power, in forms progressive in complexity and higher and higher use, enables the Creator to still farther conquer matter, and makes possible still higher achievement. The number of forms required to render possible the highest form that has appeared on earth is very great. Each creation is a necessity to this highest creation. To explain *how* this is, may not be for us now, but we assert that it is.

"Certain conditions are needed for a spirit to materialise. Certain conditions were needed before man could live on the earth. All had to be developed. We can do little now except to say this is so; and when human life was made possible on the earth, then there came the creation of man. A mystery *how* this is we grant, but not more a mystery than the conditions that enable us to clothe ourselves with flesh in a *séance* where are cognate materials in medium and sitters; and the initial creation of man on the earth was like the creation that we now effect in conditions that allow us to materialise.

"The first man was created by the Word, the Christ, from Himself individualising His life through the means that He had created through time, the years of which you cannot reckon.

"Man is thus of God, and he was created precisely as you have seen individual spirits recreate or materialise themselves in a circle that offered the required conditions. No man is born of a beast; but each beast, each living created thing, has its use in the creation of man. There is evolution, development; there is natural selection, and survival of the fittest. Conditions are first created by means of all animal life, and thus man is created—a ship is built from many parts, and man becomes man by means of a great many more parts.

"We are able to show you the exact mode of his rapid creation as plainly as you see the plant slowly take to itself its proper form from material got ready by Infinite Power, without stint of time. We are able now to take form, and to remain with you some hours; days, weeks, months—a lifetime for us to conquer in the near future; and the time is not distant when death will have no terror, because you will be able to drop one form and assume another instantly, so that no separation will be naturally, any more than there is now spiritually. The time is near when a spirit will materialise as a babe, and allow foster-parents the privilege of adopting and rearing such an individual, if they so choose, instead receiving their children by the usual genesis.

"Humanity goes right onward to the time, now comparatively near, when it will be said, 'O grave, where is thy sting? O death, where is thy victory?' and the answer will be, 'Death is swallowed up in victory!'—'there is no longer any death.'

"Even now your friends can stay hours with you, and you have sure hopes of days. Where, then, is the bitterness of death—of loss—of entire separation?"

Thus far is the discourse of the Spirit, as nearly as I can recall and render it. The Spirits who have taught me re-incarnation declare that the number of souls born into this world is as definite and unchangeable as the number of muscles in a man's body—he would be a monster with more or less bones, muscles, or organs. The amount of the matter of the earth being a fixed quantity, they say the number of spirits who belong to their body—the earth—is definite and fixed also. Hence the necessity of re-incarnation, and the economy of continued development an inevitable consequence.

They say—"Why should the skill attained by a spirit in the body be lost by that spirit being only once incarnated? His skill was gained here, and is suited to this world, is of use here, and, as far as you can see, of no use elsewhere. Onward moves the race to perfection through successive re-incarnations, all skill and knowledge and achievement being preserved by the Infinite Economist, the Divine Progenitor of the family of man. He has made us all. He is over all and in us all, and of all He will lose nothing—no particle of Earth or Spirit can be annihilated, but all must, in the Divine Economy, serve the greatest use sooner or later. God in Christ cannot restrain Himself from everlasting progress towards perfection. He can and will and must develop all to the joy of the Heaven of heavens."

The foregoing is a true rendering of the discourse above referred to, and also of other Spirit-teaching, as I have heard it through my own and others' mediumship. I claim no infallibility for them; I only ask that they may be heard, and their teaching considered.

MARY S. G. NICHOLS.

The *Banner of Light* states that in a town near Boston, New England, a young man who died in the morning took his accustomed seat at the supper-table the same evening, seen and recognised by everyone present, and then entranced, and spoke through, a younger brother. It hopes to give a circumstantial account of this remarkable manifestation.

A SPIRITUALIST OUTBURST.

REFERENCE was made, in a notice of the "Spiritual Dynamite" which so unexpectedly exploded in Salop, to a similar outbreak thirty-three years ago, in the house of an American Episcopal clergyman. Since then we have lighted upon a careful and apparently reliable history of those perplexing manifestations, gathered from records kept by the Rev. Eliakim Phelps, D.D., the much persecuted clergyman of Stratford, Connecticut, by E. W. Capron, author of "Modern Spiritualism ; its Facts and Fanaticisms," published in 1855. Mr. Capron says :—

The first disturbances took place on the 10th day of March, 1850. The house had been occupied by Dr. Phelps from the 22nd of February, 1848. It is a large and genteel country mansion, separated from the street by a fence forty-five feet from the front of the house ; the house is thirty-two feet in front, and, including the piazza, seventy feet deep, with a hall thirteen feet wide, running through the whole depth of the building. Adjoining, and opening from this hall, are two parlours and a dining-room. On the second floor are five sleeping-rooms, and on the third floor two.

None of the families who had occupied the house had ever been disturbed, or witnessed anything aside from ordinary events. At the death of Captain Purcell, the previous owner, it became the property of two daughters, of whom Dr. Phelps purchased it during the month of November, 1847. For two years previous to this it had been unoccupied. Dr. Phelps and family commenced their residence therein on the 22nd of February, 1848. Nothing occurred to excite the attention of the family out of the ordinary course of events until the 10th of March, 1850. Dr. Phelps had occupied the house more than two years, had found it an agreeable and quiet place of residence—having never been disturbed or alarmed by unusual occurrences. On the 10th of March, it being the Sabbath, Dr. Phelps and family—consisting of Mrs. Phelps, two daughters and two sons, the eldest a daughter aged sixteen, a son of twelve years, and a second daughter of six years, children of Mrs. Phelps by a former marriage, and another son of Dr. Phelps by the present marriage, not then three years old—all attended church ; and an Irish servant girl, who had been employed in the family some six months, and had shown herself to be honest and trustworthy, had gone on that day to Bridgeport, to attend the Catholic Church. On leaving the house in the morning, it appears that the doctor had secured the chamber

doors, and put the keys in his pocket; those which could be were locked inside and the keys left in them. The only door by which the chambers could be entered was locked, and the key taken by Dr. Phelps. He also locked the front door inside, left the key in the lock, and, passing out at the back-door, locked that and placed the key in his pocket.

On returning from church at noon, the front door was found standing open; the chamber doors, which were left fastened, were now open; and in the nursery the furniture was thrown about in disorder; chairs on the bed, and thrown down upon the floor; the shovel, tongs, and poker, with other things, were in unusual positions and places, everything showing unmistakable signs of the work of some rude hand making mischief in their absence. Upon discovering the disorder here, Dr. Phelps passed into other rooms on the same floor, but could see no further evidence of intrusion.

The first supposition was, very naturally, that some person or persons had entered and robbed the house. Search was immediately made in the closets where silver plate, spoons, forks, etc., were kept. All were found safe and undisturbed. A gold watch, left in an exposed place, remained there as left. The impression still remained that burglars had been in; and on examination of the windows, one was found that could be raised from the outside, and though there was no evidence of entrance having been made there, no doubt existed that this was the place of access. Thinking they might return during the afternoon, Dr. Phelps remained at home, the other members of the family going again to church. Being left alone, the doctor armed himself, and, selecting a secluded position, awaited the return of the burglars.

There was no disturbance during the afternoon; no sound of footfall; all remained quiet. On the return of the family, after the service usually closing at three o'clock, several other articles were out of place, but not in a way to make it certain that they were not moved in the morning. Articles of kitchen furniture were out of their places. A tea-kettle, which had been used at dinner-time was found hidden behind some boxes in the cellar. The bread, sugar-bowl, eggs, and numerous other things kept in the kitchen, were found where they did not belong, and where they had evidently been placed in some way which the family could not account for. Upon entering the middle chamber, occupied as a sleeping-room, a sheet was found spread over the bed outside the counterpane, and beneath which was a nightgown and chemise laid out with the arms folded across the breast, with stockings placed in a position to represent, as it seemed, a corpse disposed as is usual, before placing it in the coffin. On the wall were written characters resembling those said by certain clairvoyants to belong to a spiritual language, but which none of the family were able to decipher.

The next morning, March 11th, when the family went upstairs, after breakfast, the middle chamber had again been visited, exhibiting much the same scene of disorder presented the previous day. A sheet was spread out upon the floor, the wash-stand laid upon its back upon the sheet, a candle-stick set upon the stand, the wash-bowl placed upon one side, and the pitcher on the other. The nightgown and chemise, used on the previous occasion to represent a dead body, were found, one in the basin, the other in the pitcher. It appears that these articles of clothing were not then in use; they had been placed in a trunk which stood in a closet adjoining that room. They were replaced in the trunk when removed from the bed the day before. As they were conversing in relation to the disposition of the things as above stated, Mrs. Phelps looked under the bed, and discovered articles there, partially concealed by the bed, resembling those in question. They were taken out and pronounced to be the same. Dr. Phelps had not before examined them, but then took them, noted the name and number on each, as they were marked, folded and placed them again in the trunk, remarking that he would put them where they would stay; did not lock the trunk, not having a key, but locked the closet, and placed the key about his own person; then requesting the family to all leave the room first, which they did, the doctor, following, locked the door of the room, and kept the key. Having observed that Mrs. Phelps seemed a little troubled as to the mystery, he thought to convince her that there was no mystery in the matter, and, having secured the closet and room, he descended to the rooms below, following them all. After the lapse of fifteen minutes, some person spoke to the doctor, upon which he went up to the chambers. At the head of the stairs, out in the hall, he found the same articles which he had left as before stated. He examined them, and was *positive they were the same*. He went to the door; found it locked; entered by applying the key from his pocket; went to the closet; found it locked; took the key from his pocket; opened the door; looked in the trunk; and the articles were gone! Dr. Phelps states that he was confident there was no deception in the case, and that he then, for the first time, felt there was a mystery about the affair. He had never believed in the appearing of ghosts or departed spirits, warnings, or anything of that nature, and, at the age of three score, had never seen or heard anything connected with that class of phenomena.

On the same day (March 11th) the moving and throwing of furniture commenced. An umbrella, standing at the end of the hall, leaped, without visible assistance, a distance of, at least, twenty-five feet. Dr. Phelps saw the movement, and knows there was no perceptible agency by which the motion was produced. A bucket, standing at the head of the stairs, was thrown into the

entry below. Smaller articles, such as nails, forks, knives, spoons, bits of tin, iron, and keys, were thrown from different directions about the house. He says, "There were times when they came from such directions that they *might* have been thrown by some person in the house"—at least that may be admitted—but in very many cases the motion and point of starting were such as to preclude all possibility of deception on the part of persons in the rooms. During the afternoon Dr. and Mrs. Phelps had occasion to go to Bridgeport, a distance of some three miles. During their absence the shovel and tongs, standing in the dining-room, were thrown violently down the basement stairs; a piece of mourning crape fastened to the knocker of the back door, and the mirrors in the front chambers covered with sheets and tablecloths, as is the custom in some parts of the country while a person lies dead in the house. The crape on the door Dr. Phelps did not see, but the covering on the mirrors he removed with his own hands. The position of the mirrors in one room was such that the coverings could not, without great difficulty, have been placed there by any person about the house. Various articles were said to have been thrown about the room—the phenomena continuing in his absence about the same as when he was present in the forepart of the day. Soon after sun-down all was again quiet, and so continued through the night.

The next morning (March 12th), soon after the family were up, the same phenomena began again; knives, forks, spoons, blocks of wood, nails, etc., etc., were thrown from different directions, and with increased frequency, attended by still stranger circumstances, and those of a still more mysterious character. Mrs. Phelps expressed some alarm, and a wish that some of the neighbours might be called in. Dr. Phelps called on a retired clergyman of Stratford, a man of extensive information, much experience, and sound judgment, who was universally admitted to be capable of rendering correct judgment and good advice in such a case. He requested him to call and spend an hour at the house, to which he cheerfully consented. Dr. Phelps told him that his family had been a little excited by some occurrences in the house, but did not state any details of the matter, but desired that he would sit with them for a short time and witness for himself. He remained all day, but was, at first, firmly of the opinion that the occurrences were produced, in some way, through the agency of the girl, or some other person about the house, and his main attention was directed to the girl in the kitchen, or the children, in the expectation that he should detect them in doing it.

The door leading from the parlours to the kitchen was, by his request, locked, and all communication between it and the other parts of the house cut off; still, the throwing of articles went on as before. The children were sent out of the room, and the doors

locked ; but this made no difference. He stayed through most of the day on Thursday, and returned soon after breakfast next morning, and remained most of the time for nearly three weeks. He became satisfied, before the close of the second day, that neither the girl in the kitchen nor the children had any agency in producing the strange movements. During the day (March 12th) some of the neighbours were in the house, and small blocks of wood were seen to fall in different places in their presence ; but only one person noticed them in a way to excite inquiry, and that person was requested not to mention what she had seen.

On Wednesday, March 13th, the manifestations commenced early in the morning, in the middle chamber, the room in which the two children slept, and began while they were both asleep. A book, standing in the library, ten or twelve feet from the bed, leaped from the shelf into the middle of the room. The blower, which was in the grate, leaped out on the floor, a distance of at least six feet, the noise of which first awakened the children. At the breakfast-table several articles were thrown, amongst them a large potato, which had been sent from Pennsylvania, and laid up in a closet in the east chamber, fell on the table directly by the side of Dr. Phelps's plate, in a manner that no person could have done it without instant detection. The doctor's curiosity was much excited, and he watched, with all the scrutiny he was capable, every person in the room. He took up the potato and let it fall from different heights, in order to determine how far it must have fallen to have made the concussion that it did ; and it was adjudged by all that the distance could not have been more than twelve or fifteen inches.

The Rev. Mr. ——— came in soon after breakfast, and remained during the day. Several Bibles were opened at different passages, which seemed to be selected with a great deal of care, and indicated either by placing pieces of paper on them, or turning down a leaf. These things first occurred in the middle chamber where the library stood. While the family were at dinner, similar things were done in the parlour adjoining the dining-room. Two Bibles and an Episcopal prayer-book were opened at different passages, chairs turned forward on the floor, two solar lamps placed on the floor, a hat and man's cap put on each ; nearly everything in the room had been moved, and *in so short a time*, that it seems wholly inadmissible that any person about the house could have done it ; besides, the whole household were in the dining-room, all seated at the table, except the servant, and she was employed waiting on the table.

In the afternoon the demonstrations were confined to the middle parlour, Dr. and Mrs. Phelps, and Mr. ———, and a part of the time the eldest daughter, being present ; in the absence of the daughter the doors were locked, and the three first-named only were present.

The throwing of various things occupied the afternoon. The articles thrown were picked up and placed upon the mantel, and between the hours of one and four o'clock the number amounted to forty-six; among which were nails, bits of tin, iron, keys, and small blocks, all of which were gathered from different parts of the house; most of them from closets on the second floor, and the chambers. At one time, while Mr. M—— was standing near the centre of the room, a padlock, which was known to have been in the closet of the middle chamber, fell at his feet. He took it in his hand, letting it fall from different heights, to discover the probable distance it must have fallen to produce the concussion. After various trials it was judged to have fallen not more than two or two and a half feet. As Dr. Phelps was sitting, perhaps ten feet from the pianoforte, he saw a small toy-mouse, which was on the piano, arise as if tossed, and, describing a parabola as it came, fall at his side, so near that he took it from the floor without leaving his chair. This he speaks of seeing as distinctly as ever he saw anything, the whole being perfectly in his view. He also saw, in the same way, among other things, a nail, cotton-spool, and key, arise from behind the sofa, which stood diagonally across the corner of the room. He arose, went to the sofa, looking behind and under it, but could discover nothing which might give impulse to the articles. While examining the carpet about the sofa to find if any other things were there, without success, as his eyes were directed to one spot, there arose from that very point a piece of cheese-rind, perhaps eight inches from the floor; when he saw it first, it arose four or five feet, passed over the sofa, and fell on the floor. He is positive it was not there when he was looking at the carpet, and knows there was no visible means of its moving.

Mr. M—— suggested, as he was about to leave on Wednesday night, that if the strange phenomena should return, he would like to have some other persons called in. Early the next morning, Thursday the 14th, the manifestations commenced about the same as on the previous day. Soon after breakfast a sheet was found spread upon the floor, several Bibles were opened at different places, the candle-sticks, in a row, the highest in the middle, and covered with a sheet; other articles changed about the room, without any seeming design, more than to attract attention. Mr. M—— proposed that notes be despatched to Rev. Mr. W——, Congregational minister, and Mr. Plant, a lawyer of high standing and respectability, which was accordingly done. It was at this time that they first began to hear rappings and heavy poundings. A loud sound, like some person striking the floor with some heavy substance, was heard, generally in the middle chamber. This was usually done when no one was in the chamber, and on any one entering all was still. In one instance a chair was seen to

rise from the floor and beat down again, five or six times, with a violence which caused the house to tremble, so as to be felt in all the adjoining apartments. A large plated candlestick, standing on the mantel, was moved by some unseen power to the floor, and then rose up and down, beating the floor, until the candlestick was broken. This was the first article that was damaged about the house. Several times during the day, loud noises, like some one pounding with an axe, or some heavy substance, on the floor, were heard in different parts of the house, and several times the loud poundings terminated with a frightful scream; it was not a cry of distress, or anything that could be easily imitated, seeming like something between the cry of a cat and the bleating of a calf, but louder than either. These sounds occurred, in all, probably twenty times while the manifestations were going on. Sometimes the screams seemed to be in the third storey, sometimes in the front hall chamber, several times out in the yard, and occasionally in other places. There was, at no time, any audible expression of words. The sounds consisted of poundings, knockings, and screamings.

In the evening of this day, just after some young ladies had called, Dr. Phelps's daughter returned to the parlour, it being between nine and ten o'clock. After seeing the young ladies to the door, an iron stand, in which stood the fire-shovel, tongs, and poker, leaped from the hearth, where it stood, into the middle of the floor, and rose up and beat the floor with a force that made a jar that could be felt, and the sound heard, in any part of the house. This was seen only by the daughter, but Dr. Phelps and his wife heard the noise. The daughter ran through the dining-room to get upstairs, and, as she passed, a large table was standing, with the other furniture, arranged for breakfast the next morning. The table was three feet nine inches wide, and five feet three inches long, made of solid mahogany; and when she entered the room it rose up and beat five or six times against the floor with a force which made the house jar. The noise was heard by many persons in the house. Mrs. Phelps was alarmed, and screamed out, "Oh, take me from this place!" This happened between nine and ten o'clock p.m. Previous to this time, all manifestations had ceased by sundown, or a little after.

Soon after daylight on Friday, March 15th, movements similar to those on previous days commenced. Henry, a lad then eleven and a half years of age, attended the academy, and nothing had, thus far, ever occurred to connect these strange phenomena with his presence. Dr. Phelps had never heard or thought of particular persons being "mediums." But on this day the remarkable occurrences seemed to be connected more or less with this boy. His cap was torn on his head, so as to be entirely destroyed. Another one which he put on was treated in the same

way. First a small hole opened in the crown ; this gradually extended, and in a short time it was torn into many pieces. On another cap characters were made, apparently with chalk. They resembled those sometimes made by persons in the higher mesmeric state, describing them as characters of a spiritual language.

Five or six of these characters were, at one time, made on the boy's cap. Others, supposed to constitute a sentence, were written on a red pocket-handkerchief ; others on his pantaloons and coat, and on the *inside* of his sack-coat. Copies of these characters were taken with great care, and were preserved till September following, when they were mysteriously destroyed. From this time it became evident that some of the phenomena had some kind of connection with this boy.

An umbrella, which he was carrying, was, in a mysterious manner, torn in several pieces. His trousers were torn from the bottom upwards, as high as the knee, and sometimes higher, and were literally torn to ribbons an inch or more wide. This occurred several times under the immediate inspection of Rev. Mr. M——, which seems to fix the fact that, in those instances at least, no power visible did it. Thus it continued for several weeks, clothing to the amount of twenty dollars being destroyed. At one time, while he was riding in a carriage with Dr. Phelps, his cap on his head was torn in a mysterious manner, and his pants torn from the waistband to the bottom, in a way that no human power could have done. Dr. Phelps heard them torn, but could see nothing doing it, and knows the boy could not have done it himself. It was on this day, March 15th, that images, dressed in articles of clothing, were again seen ; only two or three appeared on that day. The most extraordinary occurrences of this kind took place on Saturday, the 16th. Soon after breakfast, two or three images appeared in the middle chamber ; soon again another, followed by others still, numbering eleven or twelve. They were formed of articles of clothing, found about the house, stuffed to resemble the human figure. A lady's dress would be stuffed in some cases with a muff ; again with a pillow, and sometimes with other dresses ; a bonnet and shoes were aptly placed to complete the figure. These, on this occasion, all but one, represented females in the attitude of devotion, some having Bibles or prayer-books placed before them. One, formed of Mrs. Phelps's dress, so much resembled the real, that the little boy, scarce three years old, coming into the room with his sister, older, whispered, " Be still, ma is saying prayers."

A portable writing-desk, usually standing on the secretary in the room, was taken and placed upon the floor, a towel spread over it, and the image of a child kneeling beside it. A Yankee clock was taken from the mantel in the nursery, and placed upon the floor in the middle room, a distance of twenty feet, and so care-

fully done that the clock was still going when discovered in its new place, though it stopped some time after. It does not appear that any of these images were seen in the process of construction, or that the clothing, which was gathered from different localities, was seen in the act of moving. When persons entered the room, everything was still, the clothing about the floor, which, upon going again within a few minutes, was found wrought into forms. The marked rapidity of their construction, and the life-like appearance of them, seems to have been truly wonderful. During this day several others than members of the family were present. In several instances, when the rooms were closed and the doors guarded, so that no person could enter, the images were constructed. To one reading or listening to the relation of these facts, the mischief and cunning evinced will seem amusing as well as most wonderful; but to the family who bore the annoyance and witnessed the terrifying demonstrations, it was a serious and trying affair.

(*To be continued.*)

WITCHCRAFT IN ENGLAND.

FREQUENT allusions being made to witchcraft in connection with Spiritualism, the following abridged account of the faith and practice of our ancestors from one to three hundred years ago, from the *Saturday Magazine*, may interest many readers:—

Among the spots and blemishes which defaced "Old England" we mean England in the days even of good Queen Bess, King James, and our Charles's, none appear of a darker dye than the evils of superstition. And of all the forms under which the superstition of our ancestors is presented to our view, the notion respecting the existence and power of witches, is perhaps the most hideous and abominable. . . . The opinions respecting witches were as cruel as they were false; and our feeling of the ridiculous is quickly turned into that of sorrow and pity, on finding not only that some of the most learned, and, generally speaking, humane of our countrymen in a past age held the common notions upon witchcraft, but that *thousands* of poor, old, and innocent persons, mostly women, were condemned and executed for this alleged offence in Great Britain alone! Dr. Grey, in his notes to the poem of "*Hudibras*," says, that he had seen an account of between three and four thousand persons who suffered death for witchcraft in the king's dominions, from 1640 to 1660. . . .

To show that the evil once reached even to the highest, both in rank and knowledge, we quote a passage from a sermon

preached before Queen Elizabeth, in 1558, by Bishop Jewel, in which the mischiefs attributed to the agency of witches, and the effects of the "evil eye" are plainly declared. "It may please your grace to understand, that witches and sorcerers within these last four years are marvellously increased within this your grace's realm. Your grace's subjects pine away, even unto the death; their colour fadeth, their flesh rotteth, their speech is benumbed, their senses are bereft. I pray God they may never practise further than upon the *subject*."

Bishop Hall speaks of a village in Lancashire, where the number of witches were larger than that of the houses. Lord Coke gravely draws a difference between a *conjuror*, a *witch*, and an *enchanter*. And the great and good Chief-Justice Hale, so late as the year 1664, in presiding as judge on the trial of two reputed witches, at Bury St. Edmund's, betrayed such a want of firmness in his mode of leaving the matter to the jury, that the poor women were found guilty upon thirteen several indictments, and executed, declaring their innocence to the last.

Matthew Hopkins, of Manningtree, in Essex, in the time of Cromwell, was appointed Witch-finder for the associated counties; and it is an accredited fact that he discovered and brought to the stake or gallows, in one year, sixty poor creatures, from the county of Essex alone, as reputed witches.

The mode of detecting these unhappy beings was various, and Hopkins was celebrated for his discernment in such matters, being looked upon as a great critic in marks and signs. The old, the indigent, and the ignorant, such as could neither plead their own cause nor hire an advocate, were the miserable victims of this knave's credulity, spleen, or avarice. One method to which he had recourse was to weigh the supposed criminal against the Church Bible, which, if she was guilty, would weigh her down. Another was to make her attempt to repeat the Lord's Prayer. It was thought that no witch could ever do this entirely, but would always omit one part or other. A witch could not weep more than three tears, and that only out of the left eye. This want of tears was, by the Witch-finders, and even by some judges, deemed a substantial proof of guilt!

Swimming a witch was a kind of proof very generally practised. She was cross-bound, the right thumb to the left toe, and the left thumb to the right toe; and thus prepared thrown into a pond or river. If guilty she could not sink, if innocent she was probably drowned. King James, who is said to have advised, if he did not invent, this kind of ordeal, gave the following sapient reason for the effect produced: That "the culprit having by her compact with the devil renounced the benefit of the waters of baptism, that element in its turn renounced her, and refused to receive her into its bosom."

EDITORIAL NOTES.

It would be curious to know, by some faculty of thought-reading for example, what effect is produced upon the mind of a scientific unbeliever by such a narrative as we give in this number of the RECORD, of the manifestations recorded by the Rev. Dr. Phelps, an American clergyman, who, for more than a year, wrote down, day by day, the violations of the "well-known laws of nature" in his parsonage; calling in his neighbours, a Presbyterian minister and lawyer to witness, and, if possible, account for them. What is the materialistic explanation?

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The Connecticut invasion does not stand alone. Similar cases have been recorded in France and Germany, and can be found in successive volumes of the *Spiritual Magazine*. The recent explosion in Shropshire is one of a great many examples of spiritual volcanics. But why they should occur here and there, now and then, with what seems lawless eccentricity, we know no more than we do the causes of volcanic eruptions, or hurricanes. Any clever astronomer can tell us when an eclipse of sun, moon, or planet, will occur a thousand years hence, to a second. Eclipses belong to the well-known laws of nature—earthquakes and volcanoes do not—which makes the difference.

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The manifestations in the domicile of "the Fox girls" at Rochester, New York, began in a similar fashion to those in Connecticut. Doors were slammed, drawers pulled out, articles thrown, and various means used to attract attention. When they shut their doors, and tried to put a stop to these proceedings, a quantity of potatoes were thrown threateningly near them. When they yielded and consented to talk with the spirits, they got quiet and orderly communications. Probably Dr. Phelps would have done the same, but as he believed the manifestations were diabolical, he refused to hold any conversation or receive any explanations.

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For all that, and perhaps all the more, the Spirits gained the end they had in view—that of calling attention to and proving the fact of their own existence, because it is not well that we who are in this phase of life should forget that there are other phases beyond. It is better that we should know that what we call

death is not the end of life. Of all learning this is most important. The difference between a life which any little accident may end any hour, and the life that survives bodily death, and goes on and on, is infinite; and to know this fact is a knowledge of infinite value. That is why people are interested in Spiritual manifestations.

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The paper on Agnosticism, we regret to observe, is not exhaustive. The Annual contains a luminous paper on "Agnostic Education," in which, of course, the more one studies the less he knows. When the pupil, by long and strenuous effort, comes to doubt his own existence and ignore everything else, he becomes a Hylo-Idealist, and graduates *Magister Agnosticorum* with all the honours.

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There is, after all, something to be said for Agnosticism. It expresses the virtue of humility. It is devoid of arrogance and presumption. An Agnostic does not assume superiority, and boast of his ignorance as if it were a virtue. He does not look down contemptuously on those who cannot possibly be more ignorant than himself. Not sure of his own existence and cock-sure that there can be nothing outside of himself, the Hylo-Idealistic Agnostic cannot make invidious comparisons. Being his own universe, and creating it day by day, as he happens to want it, he cannot find fault with his own creation. "Outcast London" and "Horrible London" bring him no pangs, because he has made them himself, and is well assured that they have no objective existence.

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We read of Indian Agnostics who find their *summum bonum* in concentrating their entire attention upon the ends of their noses. As the West must outdo the East, our Agnostics have acquired a more perfect "strabismus," and find all they desire by looking steadily and intently into themselves, where they make remarkable discoveries with their reflecting telescopes.

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Among the "contributions," as Professor Huxley sarcastically calls the letters written to the editor of *The Agnostic Annual*, was a letter from Professor Newman, from which we quote the concluding sentence. He says:—

"Do I believe that Agnosticism is destined to supplant religious supernaturalism? What I believe is so unimportant in this connection that I answer with reluctance, especially as the word 'destined' has hardly any well-definable meaning. The religious idea of supernaturalism, as implying *occasional* interferences of the Supreme

Being with the natural order, for moral or religious purposes, *is fast dying out* with all the *highly cultivated*, not through the influence of any definite doctrine (much less through such an indecisive doctrine as Agnosticism), but through the ever widening grasp of knowledge. But, side by side with high cultivation, exists—long must exist—and perhaps to ages now incalculable, a very intense belief in miraculous interferences, whether by the Supreme Being, or by inferior and capricious spirits. We see it now in Swedenborgianism, and the ever-changing forms of Spiritualism (so called). In ancient Greece and Rome, a belief in astrology and necromancy increased as fast as disbelief in the popular religion. So intense appears the love of the miraculous in us. Therefore, I do not venture to say what is *destined* to be human belief."

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This intense love of, and all but universal belief in, the miraculous has never been accounted for by those who deny the facts of Spiritualism. No one has ever told us how, in the absence of all phenomena, men, in the earliest times and everywhere, invented a belief in supernatural manifestations. How came the Chinese, Japanese, Egyptians, Peruvians, Mexicans, North American Indians, and even the Hottentots and Australians to be Spiritualists?

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Not only has the belief in spirits been universal, but the phenomena—the facts—on which it has been founded. Literature and tradition are full of relations of manifestations quite similar to those that have within the past thirty years been observed and carefully examined by thousands. As a thoroughly sensible, logical man, it would be impossible for Professor Newman to observe the *physical* manifestations examined and recorded by Mr. Crookes, Mr. Wallace, Professor Zöllner, and a score of scientific experimentalists, or even to carefully read their works, without becoming satisfied of the reality of such facts as cannot possibly be accounted for, save on the Spiritual hypothesis. The more sensible, scientific, and logical a man is, the more surely must he become a Spiritualist, when he has the opportunity of observing the phenomena.

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In regard to some facts of Spiritual manifestation, "seeing is believing" and that *only*. There are facts no prudent Spiritualist dares to tell to any who have not had experience in similar phenomena. Things are done which almost any one would declare to be physically impossible. It is not prudent to tell people what it is quite beyond their power to believe.

Thus Mr. Crookes, in his experiment of photographing a materialised spirit, was wise to get four of his scientific friends, each armed with his own camera, to assist him. Each of the five scientists took five photos—some of the materialised form alone—some of medium and spirit on the same plate, some of Mr. Crookes, medium, and spirit. By the electric light, under absolute test conditions they took forty-five photographs of a materialised spirit—a simple physical fact that could be proved any day in a court of justice or before a royal commission.

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Now, as such facts of spirit manifestation are known to several members of the Royal Society—to several members of Parliament—to Peers of the realm—to several members of the Royal family, and have been carefully recorded and illustrated in scientific journals, why should there not be a royal, or at least an officially recognised scientific commission appointed to examine the whole matter and set it forever at rest?

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It is *not well* that a man of such ability, and so open-minded and sincere a lover of truth, as Prof. Newman, should be ignorant of facts of such transcendent interest. One who knows so many things, and who so bravely stands by what he knows, ought to know the facts which demonstrate the reality of spirit-life and spirit-power.

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There are men—a great many men, whom we cannot expect to take, or, at least, to manifest the least interest in such a subject. No ambitious politician will avow a belief in anything until it is accepted by the majority, or even if it may cost him a vote. Few clergymen will risk offending the more ignorant or stupid portion of their congregations. Few doctors will risk losing their patients. The fact that Thackeray, by publishing a simple statement of facts, such as he had observed, in the *Cornhill Magazine* knocked off some thousands of its circulation, has been a warning to all editors.

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There are, as is well known, Spiritualists on the staff of every important London newspaper. Does one of them ever write an article on it or report a *séance*? *Pas si bête!* The more reckless may write leaders to ridicule the very facts they *know* to be true. The late Sergeant Cox had witnessed the most splendid manifestations, but it was only to his most trusted friends that he told his experiences. He did not publish them in his newspapers

He would not risk his judicial reputation. Fifty London barristers are Spiritualists, but we doubt if more than three avow it. The world is full of Nicodemuses.

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SLADE, the medium, had a Spiritualist barrister, Mr. C. C. MASSEY, the translator of Zöllner, to defend him, and though condemned at Bow Street for pretending to violate the "well-known laws of nature," he escaped prison by an informality, and went to convert the Professors of the University of Leipzig. Others, quite as innocent, have suffered long and horrid martyrdoms for want of such defence. In the case of Mrs. Fletcher it was held by court and jury that Spiritualism itself was a false pretence, and any medium, to-day, is liable to be sent a year to prison for taking a guinea fee—while doctors, practising a dozen contradictory quackeries, may safely pocket thousands. A little more moral courage is wanted in this unhappy world of ours. The martyr spirit is sadly out of date. Even Secularists and Atheists cuttlefish into Agnosticism. The social cuttlefish conceals his real self under a cloud of chaff—or the pseudo-scientific verbiage which answers the same purpose. When there is a living in the family, or some family he might marry into, young Hopeful serenely signs the Thirty-nine Articles—takes the "forty stripes save one," as he gently puts it, and then when he has felt the pulse of his parish decides whether he will be latitudinarian, platitudinarian, or attitudinarian—whether he will teach Calvinism in a black gown, or don a cassock and go in for Early Celebrations.

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Spiritualism, making its way by the pure force of facts, will bring sincerity. When men know that their spirit-friends are ever near them, how can they be other than honest? Once realise "the great cloud of witnesses" ever around us, and how can we dare to be cowards and hypocrites? This is the morality of Spiritualism. There is no hiding one's deeds, nor even one's thoughts. There is no waiting for the day of judgment, hoping it will never come. Every day is a judgment day. Every day our spirit-friends rejoice in all the good we do, and are sorry for all the evil. The man who knows he is ever in the sight of those who love him must wish to walk uprightly.

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Mr. Holyoake, the inventor of Secularism, as Mr. Huxley is the inventor of Agnosticism, says—as we read in Rev. Page Hopps's

Truth Seeker—"we know nothing, yet still we have the cheer of hope. There is no proof that the Future is impossible." "Saladin," the Secular candidate for a seat in Parliament, holds the exact opposite, contending with the luminosity and pertinacity of a Scotch metaphysician, that a future life for man is as impossible as a Supreme Creator and Ruler of the universe. Mr. Hopps is sorry that the inventor of Secularism can go no further than to admit the possibility, and even the hope, of a life beyond the grave.

"Mr. Holyoake," he says, "should try to put himself in the place of the rational believer, who says that his belief in the Future Life is not a mere 'survival,' a longing, a feeling, but is based upon *facts and deductions* that appear to him irresistible,—who declares that, in his opinion, this belief is calculated to be, not only a consolation in sorrow but an inspiration for work, and is one that enlarges the mind, and gives the life a larger scope, a mightier impulse, a grander hope, a deeper sanctity, and a larger joy. How, then, can the believer help being sorry for any one who misses a faith that seems to him to be of simply unspeakable value,—a faith that practically presents man as an altogether different kind of being, and gives to life here an absolutely new significance? It is no answer to say that some do very well without this faith, and that others do not feel the need of it. Yes! but we have never tried the tremendous experiment, on any large scale, of human existence without divine sympathies, and earthly life without heavenly hopes. But we do know that this belief in the persistence of life beyond the dissolution of the body has been an unspeakable help and strength to millions. How, then, can the thoughtful and earnest believer help feeling sorry for those who have come to the conclusion that man is only as one of the brutes that perish, and that his little hurried life is bounded by the cradle and the grave?

"But it is a good thing, a comforting and most blessed thing, to see that our beliefs and unbeliefs will make no vital difference to us on the other side—that they who love goodness are loved by God, even though they know Him not—and that the way of honour, truth, and love leads to heaven, though the pilgrim is unable to believe in that heaven beyond the grave."

The Rev. Mr. Hopps is, of course, a Spiritualist. His belief in the "life beyond" is based on **FACTS**—the only solid basis. Doubting Thomas would not believe his own senses of sight and hearing. He demanded the third, confirming and unmistakable evidence of *touch*, and had it, as have had thousands of Spiritualists, who have not only *seen* and *heard*, but felt the materialised forms of those they best knew and most loved in life.

To admit the possibility of life beyond the grave is something,

to hope for it is much ; but to know it as absolute fact, upon the evidence of the three senses of sight, hearing, and touch is quite another matter. It is not strange that we should very earnestly desire that all may have such proof of immortality.

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"Saladin," in the *Secular Review*, writes "at random." He says—"It is with regret that I observe some among ourselves evincing a hankering after the flesh-pots of an egotistically conscious *post-mortem* existence. In no possible region or range of *thought* can there be found even a shadow of support for a dream so wild, a hypothesis so insanely unwarrantable."

"Saladin" goes on to compare a dead man to a splintered fiddle, as if the man who thinks and feels and loves were comparable to an instrument of wood and catgut ; "and yet," he says, "it is claimed, even by some who call themselves Freethinkers, that, after an individual man has been resolved into the elements, he may yet, with continuity of conscious egoity, flap his pinions in heaven or clash his fetters in hell !"

All this because a prominent and active Secularist, one of the most clear-headed and clever we know, has, in the exercise of that "Freethought" which Secularists so energetically denounce, when it is exercised against their pet theories, attended some séances and became convinced of the reality of spiritual manifestations. "No man," says this Sultan Saladin, "who has not made up his mind as to a 'hereafter,' negating it with all possible emphasis, has any right to disturb the dominant faith of our time."

"Freethought" has its limits, and this is one of them !

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Professor Barrett, of Dublin, writes to assure us that the Psychical Research Society is not neglecting the investigation of present miracles of healing. He wishes to get all possible information on the subject. Might it not be well, then, to make a thorough inquiry into the cures said to have been supernaturally wrought at the little chapel at Knock, in Ireland ; as well as at Lourdes and La Salette, in France. We would also invite the attention of the Society to the statements published, on what seems to be good authority, respecting the miraculous cures of Prince Hohenlohe, not only in Germany, but all over the world, and particularly to the case of a cure of Cancer in Washington, the United States capital, recorded, with sworn affidavits of physicians and others, in the works of Bishop

England, of Charleston, South Carolina. "Thought-reading" is a curious phenomenon, no doubt; but assuredly there are other psychological operations more important and interesting.

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We find an instance of what is called the "faith cure" in a late number of the *Banner of Light*, which compares well with some given in an early number of the *Record*. It took place in Lafayette, Indiana, U.S.A., Oct. 20, 1883. The statement is, that—

"Miss Agnes Balter, a young lady of highly respectable connections, was stricken with paralysis eight years ago, the disease affecting her from the hip down. She is a devout member of St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church, and has made her affliction the subject of prayer through all her long years of suffering, but with no good results. On the date mentioned, she requested to be taken to the church, where the forty-hours' service was in progress. She prayed devoutly during the reading of the mass, and before it was concluded, she arose and walked out of the church sound and well, the first time in eight years she had been able to take a step unaided. The worshipping assembly, who knew of her affliction, were astonished beyond description, and all unite in ascribing it to the power of prayer."

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"Re-incarnation"—the doctrine that the spirits who have lived human lives upon this Earth are born again upon it, living a succession of Earth lives, as a means of progress and purification is, in more ways than one, a mystery. It is a mystery that it should have been taught in the early days of modern manifestations in France, and not in America or England. Why one should be reborn on this planet rather than some other is a mystery. Why some spirits assert and others deny the fact, if it be a fact, is a mystery. Of course, all mysteries will be solved—one reason why we do not like the idea of annihilation.

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A year ago, we had a discussion on Re-incarnation, at the "C. A. S." Miss Arundale, a clever Theosophist and Re-incarnationist, read a paper strongly asserting and vindicating the idea of being born again, and as often as necessary. A learned and philosophical spirit, controlling Mr. Morse, the well-known trance-medium, declared that he knew no such fact, and believed in no such doctrine. A lady present, widely recognised as one of the most amiable and eloquent of our most distinguished women, declared not only her belief but her knowledge of the fact, saying that she had a distinct memory of having lived five times upon the Earth, and that some of her experiences were far from agreeable.

What an advantage such a memory must be for writing an interesting autobiography! And may not our novelists—who seem to be drawing upon imagination and observation for a variety of characters and incidents—be merely bringing them from the storehouse of memory? But memory itself is a great mystery. Materialists tell us it is a property of certain brain cells upon or within which scenes and events are photographed, phonographed, etc., so that by the action of proper stimuli they can be reproduced, and become objects of perception—"thinks," as Dr. Lewins says. But the mysteries of Materialism are quite as difficult as those of Spiritualism. —::—

Dr. Nichols's objection, as we remember it, was simply a matter of taste. Like the Frenchman invited a second time to take part in a fox-hunt, he said—"One such fun, it is enough." If he must have another material body, why not in another planet—Mars, for instance, or the still older ones, the splendid orbs of Jupiter and Saturn? If human soul-life begins its development in Mercury, it may well take the range of our solar system—only it is hard to conceive that many of our Earth-souls—the souls of "Outcast," and "Horrible" London, for example, can have benefitted by past experiences. —::—

The mysteries of life, in any way we look at them, are very awful, but that is not a reason for shutting our eyes to them, but rather for opening them widely and learning all we can. The Spiritualist who is one not merely in theory or by faith, but from observation of facts which prove continued personal existence, though still surrounded by mysteries, has solved the greatest. He has no doubt at all that life goes on. His friends have come and told him that. In some cases they try to say more, but without much success. One of the most intelligent and loving of departed spirits known to us said—"Our life is so different from yours that you have no words, and we can find no analogies, by which we can describe or you comprehend it." —::—

Eighteen centuries ago the most enlightened and inspired had the same difficulty. It was then said—"Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Curious as we may be with a natural curiosity about the future, we have no experience that can give us a "realising

sense" of the nature of the life to come. All we can do is to form an exalted ideal of uses and enjoyments, based upon our present experiences and observations. It must be the same life expanded, elevated, ennobled, intensified, with infinite development in eternal progression; but all our imagination will be surpassed and all the hopes we can form will be more than realised. Those who "believe in God the Father Almighty" must believe that He will be vindicated in all His works to all His creatures.

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To keep even with the times we should have written something in glorification of MARTIN LUTHER. But as "the patient waiter is never the loser," we find our work done to our hands by two Spiritualists—as zealous and radical reformers as Luther himself. Mr. JAMES BURNS and Mr. COLVILLE have both spoken with more or less of inspiration and wisdom.

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LUTHER, we are told by Mr. BURNS, got his ideas from "the Bible, which, like a dangerous dog, was kept chained up in a safe place." This chaining the Bible to church pillars in pre-reformation times, is somewhat misrepresented. Bibles then and other books were very scarce and dear. The Bible was chained to prevent its being stolen, and chained to a church pillar that all who could read might read it.

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LUTHER sturdily differed in many points from modern Protestants. He maintained the doctrine of the "Real Presence," and he resolutely broke the Sabbath and denounced several books of the Bible. Also he permitted polygamy, at least to princes. CALVIN, also, was not a Sabbatarian, and kept up the bad custom of burning heretics. In fact, most of the Reformers of that age needed reforming.

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Mr. Colville, or his "control" speaking through him, says—

"The mistake of Luther's life was his sanction of an unhallowed alliance between Church and State. Civil and ecclesiastical dominion in Germany has led to the fashionable Agnosticism of the present day, which, priding itself upon unity with science, is utterly and hopelessly ignorant concerning all things spiritual. In England, Henry VIII. was at the time of the Reformation proclaimed Head of the Church, and surely little if anything could be gained by substituting a licentious monarch for a licentious pope. All popes have not been wicked, and all kings have not been wicked,

but the absolute kingly authority in matters of religion is just as disastrous to the spiritual welfare of mankind, as absolute priestly rule can be. In those stormy days, Catholics burnt Protestants, and Protestants returned the compliment and burnt Catholics. Luther was as bitter against the Zwinglians, who denied consubstantiation, as the advocates of transubstantiation were against Luther's doctrine. Luther was intolerant, and very dogmatic and impetuous; but he came at a time when such a man as he was needed. He was like a sharp surgeon's knife; palliative measures he tried at first, and, when they failed, he justified the use of the sword. He resembled Mahomet more than Jesus, and his theology is Paulism of the most downright Epistle-to-the-Romans type. Luther denounced the Epistle of James as unchristian, because it laid stress upon good works. He also repudiated the Book of Revelation; so he was not a champion of 'the whole Bible.'

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It appears that we were quite accurate in our impression that the little medium of the Shropshire mystery—the explosions of Spirit dynamite—had been bullied by the reporters into making a confession that she, a maid-servant of thirteen years, had humbugged doctors, police, clergymen, her employers, and a whole district. The following paragraph from a local paper confirms our impression, and we expect in due time to hear of more explosions :—

"THE ALLEGED SHROPSHIRE MYSTERY.—The girl Emma Davis, of Weston Lullingfield, has been interviewed by some local reporters, and has emphatically declared that her alleged confession that she knew how the tricks were performed was forced from her by the violent accusations of some of the London reporters. The manifestations have since continued, and on Friday the girl was taken to London by a lady and gentleman, with her parent's consent, and they have promised to do well by the girl."

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Mr. Eglinton, our readers will be glad to learn, has resolved to make his extraordinary gifts once more available to all serious inquirers into the mysteries of Spiritualism. Taking convenient rooms in a central and easily accessible position, he intends to have drawing-room lectures, conferences, and séances under strictly test conditions for all who wish to be satisfied of the reality of these manifestations. The plan is a thoroughly good one, and just what is needed to place the matter upon a purely scientific basis.

The common idea of legal difficulties is absurd. There is a statute, no doubt, by which any person "*pretending* to practise witchcraft, necromancy," etc., can be punished; and a count in the indictment against Mrs. Fletcher was based upon that ancient statute; but it was contemptuously quashed on the trial. Mr. Eglinton will sit for the scientific investigation of whatever phenomena may be manifested, and the magistrates at Bow Street will not be asked to decide upon their agreement with "the known laws of nature."

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We are not going back to the practice of Chief Justice Sir Matthew Hale, who sent witches to the gallows with perfect complacency. It is quite right that fraud of any kind, even upon the Stock Exchange, should be punished; but Mr. Eglinton will not give a jury of London shopkeepers the opportunity to convict him of obtaining money by false pretences. Trickster or not, he certainly knows a trick worth two of that!

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Spiritual investigations, not with Mr. Eglinton alone, but with all genuine mediums, are about to take a new departure. What scientific professors like Hare, Crookes, Wallace, and Zöllner have accomplished with scientific apparatus and appliances, will soon be done by a large body of experimenters, including persons of the highest rank, as well as the highest intelligence. In our next number we hope to give more particulars, as well as to furnish further authentic reports of these investigations.

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MR. ARTHUR JAMES MELHUSH, F.R.A.S. and F.R.M.S., has celebrated the holidays, by publishing through H. Vickers, 317 Strand, W.C., "A GHOSTLY ANNUAL, consisting of a personal statement of "The Truth about Ghosts," and a reprint of letters from the *Daily Telegraph*. It is a very solid three-pence worth, which we hope to dip into more freely in our next.

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The *Contemporary Review* for the first month of the year, it is said, will contain an article on "Apparitions," by the Bishop of Carlisle; while Mrs. Oliphant will contribute to *Blackwood* "A Story of the Seen and Unseen—a tale of the higher Spiritualism." We expect something good from the pen of the celebrated authoress.